

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership
Strategic Business Leadership

Adventist University of Africa

School of Post Graduate Studies

Title: GENDER INEQUALITY AND DISPARITY IN ENTERPRISES AND ITS
EFFECT ON WORK PERFORMANCE IN MALAWI: AN ANALYSIS OF
CULTURE, AGE, GENDER

Researcher: Rubbie Mzumara Mtike

Primary Advisor: Risper Awour, PhD

Secondary Advisor: Yetunde Odeyemi, PhD

Methodologist: Derick Deya. PhD

Date:

There have been numerous studies on gender inequality and its persistence since 18th century. Despite studies, international, regional and national laws and policies, gender inequality continues to persist. This study was to explore the persistence of gender inequality among employees and its impact on gender disparity at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi. The elimination of gender inequality is inadequately addressed leading to persistence of gender inequality. The research questions were: 1. Is there a relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace? 2. What Is the relationship between employees' performance and perceptions towards gender

equality at the workplace? 3. To what extent does culture affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. 4. What is the effect of employees' age on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace? 5. What is the impact of gender on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace? Cross-sectional quantitative research design was used to explore the effect of culture, age and gender on employees' perspectives towards gender equality and how it correlates with gender disparity and work performance at the workplace. Questionnaires were administered to human resource department and 383 employees from 26 enterprises from a population of 85,089 employees and 262 companies in Mzuzu city. Correlation and multiple regression analysis were done using PASW where correlation revealed statistically significant relationship between gender disparity ($r=.141, p = 0.006 < 0.05$), work performance ($r = .451, p = 0.000 < 0.05$) with dependent variable employees' perceptions towards gender equality. Multiple regression showed culture with 14% variance on employees' perception towards gender equality with ($\beta = -.137, t = -2.87, p=.004 < 0.05$) and was statistically significant. Age and gender were not statistically significant. Moderating variables between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality, Gender inequality was statistically significant with ($\beta = -.185, t = -3.646, p=.000 < 0.05$) and Education was not. Therefore, culture moderated by gender inequality has an effect on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Strategies towards Gender equality have to be contextualized.

Adventist University of Africa
School of Post-Graduate Studies

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ON WORK PERFORMANCE IN
MALAWI: AN ANALYSIS OF CULTURE, AGE, GENDER

A dissertation
presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Rubbie Mzumara Mtike

April 2023

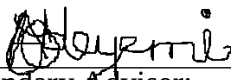
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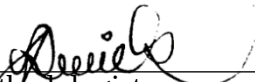
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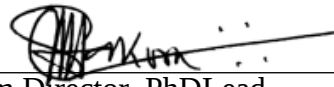
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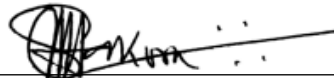
APPROVED BY:


Primary Adviser:
Risper Awour, PhD


Secondary Adviser:
Yetunde Odeyemi, PhD


Methodologist:
Derick Deya, PhD


Program Director, PhDLead
Musa Nyakora, PhD


Head of Department, Social Sciences
Musa Nyakora, PhD

Dean, School of Post Graduate Studies
Losan Bonde, PhD

External Examiner

Date: _____

Dedicated to those going through the effects
of gender inequality in the society

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
DTDA	Danish Trade Union Development Agency
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NHSRC	National Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee
PASW	Predictive Analytics Software
PAWO	Pan African Women's Congress
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
WAMM	Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

There have been numerous studies over the decades on gender equality and the persistence of gender inequality. The promotion of gender equality goes back to as far as the 18th century where several pioneers advocated for gender equality. In the 18th century, one pioneer Mary Wallstonecraft who was a prominent feminist philosopher promoted gender equality through publications such as *“Thoughts on the Education for Daughters”* in 1787 and *“Vindication on the rights of Women”* in 1792. In her publications she advocated for the rights of women towards right to life, liberty, education, work and pursuit to happiness (Guyen M, 2022). In the 19th century, there were pioneers such as Emma Willard from America in 1814, Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage also from America in 1869 and Gracia Molina de Pick from Mexico in 1944 who advocated for girls and women’s education and the right to vote (MacGregor, 2012).

Since then, there have been multiple studies on gender inequality which have been carried out by different individuals in the countries around the world such as in India, the United States of America (USA), Germany, Portugal, Iceland, not leaving out countries in the Africa continent. In India, Mies (1998) questions the persistence of gender inequality and she refers to gender inequality as a patriarchal system. She questions why such a brutal system does not disappear. After observing a similar trend of patriarchy in India and Germany, Mies (1998) understood it as part of the

system of exploiting and oppressing women that has been in existence for about five thousand years and has pierced and changed all “great civilizations and cultures of the globe” (Mies, 1998).

The persistence was also acknowledged in some of the studies which were conducted in Africa which stated that despite all the debates on gender equity and equality there is a persistence of gender inequality at the workplace manifested in the biological determinism of division of labour (Subbo 2002; Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Subbo and Kameri-Mbote found it also to be exploitative of the relationship between men and women because it attempts to explain the division of labour as an inborn phenomenon hence beyond the scope of social change (Subbo 2002; Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Education has also been used to bring a balance in equality to men and women in the society and this has seen parity in education and yet gender inequality persists (Kameri-Mbote, 2003).

Later in the years, Jayachandran (2015) found that not only is limited education for the female gender a factor that contributes to gender inequality in developing countries, but society’s cultural norms are also great contributors particularly in countries with patriarchal systems where men are valued more than women (Jayachandran, 2015). In the same period, UNDP indicated that there are new dimensions of gender inequality arising, such as reversals, which occur when the victims of gender inequality shift from one gender to the other (UNDP, 2013). Recently, in another Indian study conducted by Siddiqi and Shafiq (2017) it was stated that the persistence of gender inequality continues to be observed in the families, workplaces, and society in general. African study by Azzuh and Amodu also reported that in the Sub-Saharan Africa, despite the progress in advocacy against gender inequality at the workplace and despite the numerous studies and global efforts

to tackle the existing persistent and long-term patterns of gender inequality, it seems not to go away and remains highly prevalent in the workplace (Azuh & Amodu, 2017). In their report Siddiqi and Shafiq went ahead and suggested a change in the policies and contextualization of gender equality (Siddiqi & Shafiq 2017).

Similarly, in Portugal in 2018, there was a study by Vernier which indicated that women continue to face barriers in public places and their careers as a result of diverse levels of discrimination (Verniers 2018, p1) such as decision-making level. Furthermore, in the same year, a study by Einarsdottir (2018) in Iceland showed that women still find workplace gender inequality challenging especially for those seeking top management positions during their career life (p11) and are still striving for recognition. This has led to women in trying to get professional recognition behaving like men and jumping at opportunities that present themselves (Einarsdottir 2018, p11) of which constitutes a change of identity for the female gender to male gender behaviour which has been termed defeminization (UNDP, 2013).

Gender disparity is the differences in access to resources, status and wellbeing between genders or the lack of access to resources, status and wellbeing coming as a result of gender inequality. Gender disparity stems out from gender inequality and inhibits women from receiving benefits or accessing opportunities just like their counterparts at the workplace or decision-making positions such as Member of Parliament (Kayuni, 2017). Literature shows that this is being experienced by women in the public arena such as limited access or being constrained from participating in some of the economic activities (Mizrahi and Moleketi 2015). In the recent years, gender disparity started being experienced through the defeminization of women in the workforce especially in the industrial area as reported by UNDP (2013), where access is being restricted for women (UNDP, 2013). Rwanda despite its strides

towards gender equality, women are still facing resistance from both male and female workers attributing this to work overload in their families due to their family obligations which have been socially constructed and cultural expectations which continue to play away from the public eye (Nyiransabimana, 2018) hence the inequality continues. In public labour force, accessing loans and participation in economic agriculture activities, women are trailing men in Rwanda as result of the household chores depriving them of enough time for participation in public development activities, (Republic of Rwanda, 2019). In the gender equality global report by Equileap (2021), gender disparity is reported in terms of pay gap disparities (Equileap report, 2021, p 12) and in another study as preferential recruitment and promotions (Foley et al, 2019). The Equileap study showed that “Globally, only 15 companies out of 3,702 have eliminated their gender pay gap” (Equileap report, 2021, p 12). Furthermore, the report stated that of the 100 countries that have shown improvement, but none of the African countries is listed among them (Equileap report, 2021). COVID 19 has brought this to light as many women have lost employment because they were mostly in lower paying jobs which were deemed non-essential (Bateman & Ross, 2020) creating gender inequality persistence (ILO, 2021).

On the other hand, there have been positive steps taken towards gender equality globally. The Global Gender Gap Index measuring the progress of gender equality using four key dimensions which are participation in economy, access to opportunity, education, health and participation in politics shows the progress. Iceland which is number one globally and Rwanda which is 6th world wide leading in the Sub-Saharan Africa are heading towards gender equality (Whiting, 2022). In Africa, Rwanda by 1994, started promoting gender equality that by 2003, there were 62% women representation in Parliament (UNDP, 2018) which reached 64% in 2013

(Rwabyoma, 2017). The Rwanda's women representation in Parliament has been outstanding making them the world leader in parliamentary representation (UNDP, 2018). However, the persistence of gender inequality is visible especially in the private sector (Madichie 2023). Iceland has closed the gender gap by 90% and has topped the world for the 12th year out of 146 countries. Yet there is still gender inequality persistence in these countries where the parity has also dropped due to COVID-19 (Whiting 2022; Zahidi, 2022).

Malawi has also been progressing with the implementation of gender equality supported by both men and women, coming up with laws and policies against gender inequality (Kayuni, 2017). In 2020, Africa was reported experiencing an improvement towards gender equality in political decision making, education, and other services (Apollos, 2020 a) of which Malawi is part of it especially on education. In a 2020 Pan African Women's Congress (PAWO), it was also acknowledged that there is progress in Africa towards gender equality despite the need for more efforts to be done (Apollos, 2020 b). Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2021) in its report stated that there has been progress towards gender equality in education in Malawi where the literacy rate for women is 55,2% while men is at 69,8 % (HSRC, 2021) p3. Recently, it has been reported that there has been progress towards gender equality in education, women's participation in political domains and access to economic rights at the workplace (World Bank 2022).

In Malawi, Kayuni (2017) stated that Malawi has managed to promote gender equality in its laws and constitution (Kayuni, 2017; Adolfsson & Madsen, 2020). However, women are still underrepresented in parliament, which is the law-making body in Malawi (Kayuni, 2017). This tends to force a conclusively clear indication that their participation in national decision-making processes is limited leading to

failure in the implementation of laws promoting gender equality. In other studies, such as Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) the conclusion is that gender-based discrimination is still affecting women in Malawi, and it is being experienced at the social, political, and economical level (OXFAM, 2018, Mtike, & Awuor, 2021). DTDA, (2020) also reported that “Malawian women’s employment-to population ratio has a significant lower proportion than men” p14. Women’s employment share is less than that of men in most formal employment sector (DTDA 2020) p15. Further, UNFPA (2022) reports on its website that in Malawi,

Both in urban areas and in rural areas, labour force participation rate of males is higher than that of females. Unemployment rate among males is 7 percent compared to 12 percent among females. Young people in the age group 15-24 years have a low labour force participation rate and the highest unemployment rate, the situation being slightly worse for females (p. 1).

Also, the greatest parity gap is experienced at political level with only 22.9% of women participating in parliamentary decision making against 77.1% of their male counter parts (HSRC, 2021) p. 3. Lovell (2021) stated in his paper that, Malawi has numerous acts, policies and plans of promoting gender equality, but “due to the patriarchal system dominance, gender inequality is still deep-rooted” p. 4. Lovell 2021 states that “this is evident in Malawi women’s dominance in low-income activities and unpaid care” p4. Their participation in decision making forum is limited such as in parliament (Mussa & Masanjala, 2015; Kayuni, 2017; Lovell, 2021).

The proliferation of these studies is an indication of gender inequality and disparity relentless presence in society inducing more studies to help understand how to counter gender inequality and disparity and its negative impacts. This supports the views of Miller (2018) that it is also important to bring gender disparities to the forefront so as to better understand the different experiences in the workplace and move to change cultures of discrimination (Miller, 2018, p2). This has become

pertinent as the gains of entrenching equality that runs contrary to social norms and cultural values are running deep fostering the fruit of change in diverse ways, such as; a) the occurrence of backlashes in the form of deliberately defining professions and careers by gender, b) the lack of support for women, such as in the field of engineering which is typically considered the domain of men and masculinity, when it became obvious that women could thrive in such professional fields, c) observed negative impacts of gender reversals manifested in certain aspects of development for example lower enrolment and retention of males in schools (UNDP, 2013). This has been stated to affect work performance at the work place (Umesi, 2021; Kotur 2014). It is apparent that there is persistence in gender inequality at all levels. As such, there is a need for more studies to help understand how to counter gender inequality and its negative impacts.

Problem Statement

The persistence of gender inequality in spite of the various promulgation of decrees backed by law, and policies, even in a country like Malawi that has a long history of legislative and documented gender laws was the basis for this study. Despite the numerous studies and global efforts to tackle existing, persistent and long-term patterns of gender inequality, it is still being experienced in all aspects of society including the workplace. Gender disparity is also being experienced in employment recruitments, promotion requirements and has tagged one as pay gap. Furthermore, there are still inconsistencies in the progress toward gender equality and disparity even from the significant country's gender law and decision-making bodies, such as the parliament. New dimensions of gender inequality and gender disparity have been arising, that occur when gender inequality and gender disparity shifts from one gender to the other possibly hindering the progress that is already being made. This study will

cover the following gaps: Firstly, the elimination of gender inequality is inadequately addressed on a wider scale, this leads to the persistence of gender inequality that is seen even in the workplace. Secondly, there aren't sufficient studies in Malawi pertaining to the gender equality and gender disparity and how it affects employees work performance. Therefore, this study is contributing to the state of Malawi as regards to gender equality and disparity.

Research Objective

This study was intended to explore the culture of employees, age and gender, and their impact on the perspectives of employees in regards to gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi. The study further investigated the relationship between gender disparity and work performance with employees' perceptions towards gender equality and the moderating effect of education and gender inequality between culture and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City?
2. What is the relationship between employees' performance and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City?
3. To what extent does culture affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

4. What is the effect of employees' age on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the work place in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City?
5. What is the impact of gender on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City?

Null Hypothesis

Ho:1 There is no statistically significant relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the work place in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City

Ho:2 There is no statistically significant relationship between employees' performance and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City.

Ho:3 Culture does not statistically significantly affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Ho:4 Employees' age does not statistically significantly affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Ho:5 Employees' gender does not statistically significantly affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality and disparity in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Conceptual Framework

Gender inequality continues to persist despite the many studies and support the issue of gender equality has enjoyed over the years. Azuh (2017) suggests that this

was because of the nature of studies that do not emphasize what is preventing the progress to gender equality. He had mentioned that a lot of research has been done on gender inequality with little emphasis concerning obstacles, hindrances and implications of gender inequality (Azuh & Amodu, 2017). Hofstede's 2011 report stated that culture is one of the effectors of gender inequality and UNFPA in 2015 reiterated that cultural practices have contributed to women's plight on inequality. A Malawian Minister of gender, children, and welfare services attributed Malawi's persistence of gender inequality to stereotypical attitudes, negative cultural norms, beliefs and practices in Malawi (Klaveren, Tijdens, Hughie-Williams, Martin, 2009). As Miller states "studies describing the gender gap are important", (Miller, 2018, p2). At the same time continued acknowledgement of the existence of the gap and how it is experienced is also important.

Two theories have been used in this study, the social cognitive theory and gender schema theory as explained by Bussey and Bandura (1999). These two theories used show that one's perceptions on gender inequality or equality may be affected by the circumstances, one is found in.

The Social Cognitive Theory

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) states that some sections of human's knowledge can be related to their observation of the context, interactions and experiences that result in the social construction of their gender roles. The evaluations and treatment of male and female children in society and homes shape their perceptions and behaviours towards the division of labour. The social cognitive theory will be used to examine the effect of socialization and how context's interactions and experiences may result in social constructions causing gender inequality at the workplace.

The Gender Schema Theory

The gender schema theory is where children learn from the culture in which they live what it means to be a boy and what it means to be a girl. This causes them to adjust their behaviour according to gender norms and societal expectations. With the gender schema theory, gender lenses are worn early in the life circle. The norms are adapted at an early stage as the children identify themselves with their gender roles through socialization and cultural practices. These affect their attitudes and behaviour such as believing that a boy is supposed to be aggressive and strong whereas a girl is supposed to be feminine, sweet and caring (Bussey & Bandura 1999). The gender schema theory has been used to explore the extent to which culture affects the perspectives of male and female of gender inequality.

The Social Cognitive theory and Gender Schema theory had influenced the conceptual framework below that this study is based on. The proposed conceptual framework Figure 1 showed that gender stereotyping, attitude toward gender within a cultural context and age influences perspectives of gender equality. The independent variable is moderated by gender inequality and education. Gender inequality are the cultural practices that take place during the interaction in a cultural context that through the norms, values and social expectations have gender inequality (Hefner V., 2018, Warner R., 2013). Education has been used since the 18th century as median of achieving gender equality in society. (Guven M, 2022, MacGregor, 2012) and education parity is being reached. Then there are the mediating variables representing the hypothesis influential sequence with the mediating variable in between the dependent variable and independent variable but being influenced by the independent variable and the mediator influencing the dependent variable (Hefner V., 2018, Warner R., 2013). Therefore from literature and observations culture, age and gender

have an influence on gender disparity which is the way employees are allowed access to resources and opportunities which has a relationship with the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Cultural practices such as stereotyping and social expectations influence work performance which has a relationship with the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Hence the variables in the conceptual framework.

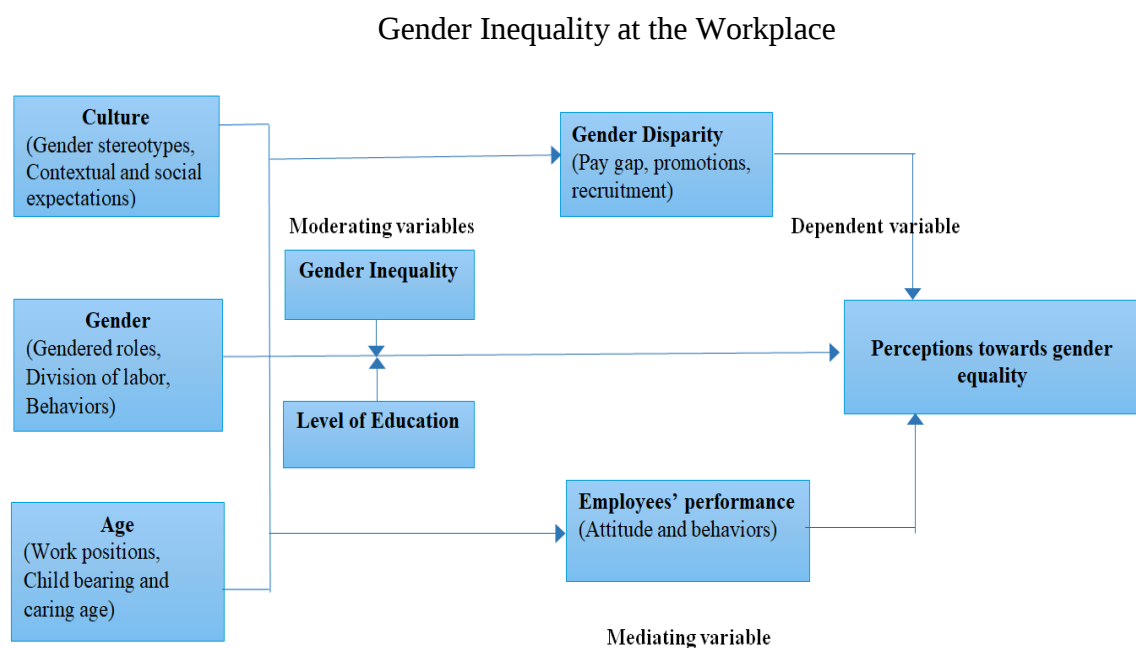


Figure 1. Proposed Gender Inequality at the Workplace Model
Source: Researchers own data

Variables

Independent variables: Culture, Gender, Age

Moderating variables: Gender Inequality, Education

Mediating variables: Gender Disparity, Employees performance

Dependent variable: Employees Perceptions towards gender equality

Significance of the Study

More studies are needed to understand the causes and work towards improving the existing gender equality strategies. This study was intended to contribute to the growing body on the awareness of gender equality and assist in bridging some of the gaps in the way gender inequality is perceived in Malawi. As such, the results might contribute to the theory of gender equality in Africa which could be used to strengthen the advocacy for gender equality in an evidence-based manner using statistical data that look beyond observed culture for sustainable impact.

This study was intended to contribute to the research knowledge on gender equality and its impact from both an objective point of view and a subjective view. The study was intended also to help resolve issues such as the suppression of men in the process of promoting women that have been overlooked using subjective research studies only in dealing with gender equality at the workplace.

The study further intended to contribute to the wider theoretical knowledge on the effect of cultural values on gender equality through Malawian voices. With a limited body of research available on the subject, the study has added to the literature that's growing on perceptions of gender inequality and gender disparity at the workplace in Malawi. It has also contributed to already existing recommendations on gender equality and gender disparity and its impact on work performance at the workplace.

This study intends to create awareness and create a dialogue platform for gender-balanced actors to listen to each other on how to move beyond where Malawi is today while pursuing sustainable gender equality progress. Recommendations from the study on how to deal with the nation's persisting deep-rooted gender inequality despite its promotion through constitutional and legal reforms have to be discussed.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

1. This study was neither exhaustive nor did it provide comprehensive treatment on the topic of persistence of gender inequality among employees of medium and large enterprises and its impact on gender disparity at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi.
2. The study was not able to study the tribal lines in the organizations that may influence the obstacles to gender equality in Mzuzu City, Malawi.
3. The study did not include a study on the background of the women and men in the organizations to check their family origins.

Operational Definition of Terms

Age- It is the workforce age which is from 18 years old and above 65 years old and are found at the workplace.

Culture- is the ideas, norms, beliefs, values, customs, symbols and social behaviour of a particular society that are generally and unconsciously accepted in the society and distinguishes them from other societies.

De facto discrimination – continued imbalance or discrimination which is caused unintentionally by the enactment of international, national or organizations equality laws and policies.

De jure equality– That which is governed by international, national or organizational law and policies where every person is given the same thing without considering the existing differences between the people which may be by nature (biological) or unnatural (such as education).

Education – Acquiring knowledge through formal education to enable one to be able to participate in the public economic activities and is regarded as a pathway to gender equality.

Effectors - in this study effectors mean one that causes or brings about something.

Enterprise in this study means the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

Formal equality is the traditional equal treatment which does not include the differential treatment to provide a level playing ground for people concerned (in this case male and female).

Gender discrimination refers to different treatment given to individuals because of their gender. It is a situation in which someone is treated less well because of their gender, usually when a woman is treated less well than a man or it occurs when an individual is denied benefits, under rewarded or suffer sort of punishment at work for behavior that defy social gender expectations or stereotypes.

Gender Disparity refers to differences in individuals' access to resources, opportunities and well-being due to their gender, which usually favors men and is often institutionalized through the law, justice and social norms.

Gender Equality refers to giving men and women equal opportunities (political, social, economic and cultural), rights and obligations in all spheres of life which entail that all human beings, both men and women are free to develop their skills and make choices without limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices.

Gender Equity refers to fair treatment of women and men, according to their respective needs which necessitates differential treatment which in this case means that a man and a woman cannot receive the same treatment to make them equal because their needs are different by nature.

Gender in this study refers to the characteristics of being a male or a female employee in medium to large enterprises.

Gender inequality - Social process by which men and women are treated differently advantageously or disadvantageously under similar circumstances because of their gender.

Gender lens – means how one is expected to act, speak, dress or behave based upon one's sex or gender leading to gender roles in a society or organization and assigning them as being for men and for women in accordance with the cultural expectations of the society.

Large enterprises in this case are enterprises consisting of 100 and above employees.

Malawi in this study means Mzuzu City which is the third city, located in the northern part of Malawi.

Medium enterprises in this case are enterprises consisting of 21 to 99 employees.

Stereotyping – It is to believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same.

Substantive equality is the “levelling of the playing ground” through discrimination or differential treatment of persons to achieve equality.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender Inequality

Gender inequality defined: The term gender is defined as “a social construct which assets expectation capabilities and responsibilities of men and women which are not biologically determined” (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui (2009) p. 2).

Furthermore, gender inequality is defined as “the social process by which people are treated differently and disadvantageously, under similar circumstances, based on gender” (Kent, 2007, p. 137). With these definitions, it could be deduced that if the male and female genders were to be treated in the same manner despite their gender, then there is gender equality.

Equality on the other hand, as discussed by Kameri-Mbote (2013), is stated as having its main goal in the pursuit of justice giving all individuals the same choices and opportunities to maximize their well-being. This is what is referred to as formal equality, which Kameri-Mbote in her paper, stated that there is a distinction on how one gender is being treated to the other in the hopes of achieving equality.

However, she continues to state that formal equality premised on equal treatment is difficult to achieve because “de jure” equality can lead to “de facto” discrimination (Kameri-Mbote, 2013). In other words, prescribed laws on gender equality can lead to actual gender inequality. These laws and their tenants on gender inequality fail to take into consideration differences that have been brought about by the social construction and biological nature of a human being rather than looking at

differences only (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). She further explained that true equal treatment is the treatment of likes in a similar manner and unlike in an unlike manner defined as equity. Equity takes into consideration differences that are a result of creation or the social construction of femaleness and maleness. This type of equality Kameri-Mbote (2013) termed as ‘substantive equality’ where distinctions are taken into consideration to bring about equality by “levelling the playing field” (Kameri-Mbote 2013). Creation and social construction of femaleness and maleness are taken into consideration through discrimination as a way of providing equal treatment.

In her paper, Kameri-Mbote (2013) wrote about the necessity of using the substantive equality which is levelling of the playing ground through discrimination or differential treatment to achieve equality. Substantive equality seeks to address the shortcomings of formal equality. Formal equality did not consider differential treatment but rather equal treatment as a means of achieving gender equality. Formal equality has been for a long time the traditional equal treatment which did not include the differential treatment. Relatively, substantive equality allows for some discrimination or differential treatment and is justified on account of leveling the playing field to achieve equality. This is to ensure equity is achieved. Because of this, The United Nations came up with The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to include differential treatment. However, even though differential treatment is allowed under article 4 of CEDAW, which many states are signatories to, to adopt, inequality is still being experienced.

This phenomenon can be traced as far back as the 18th century, where there have been critiques on the historical exclusion of women from the activities of the society and definition of domains considered to be those of women and not of men (Alahira, 2014, p.71). Multiple pioneers have sprung up to push for gender equality in

society as well as the workplace. The genesis of the advocacy for gender equality in the career system as reported by Guven, 2022 is in the 18th century. In this century Mary Wallstonecraft who was a prominent feminist philosopher promoted gender equality through publications. Some of her publications were “*Thoughts on the Education for Daughters*” in 1787 and “*Vindication on the rights of Women*” in 1792. In her publications she advocated for the rights of women towards right to life, liberty, education, work and pursuit to happiness (Guven M, 2022). In the 19th century MacGregor, 2012 in his study, he discussed pioneers such as Emma Willard who founded Troy Female Seminary in 1814 to provide young women with an education comparable to that of young men. She taught herself philosophy and politics, which were then areas reserved for men. She was moving education for women forward and was made principal of the women’s academy in Middlebury, Vermont, at an early age of 20. She also lobbied for the legislation of women education equal to that of men (MacGregor, 2012). In 1869, Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage, a philanthropist who graduated from the Troy Female Seminary founded Russell Sage College to educate the women of influence in the world who were ready to take their places in the professional world (MacGregor, 2012). Then in 1944, Gracia Molina de Pick, a social feminist activist, educational reformer and philanthropist, in Mexico at the age of 16 led a youth section of the only political party that advocated for women’s voting rights and several organizations that promoted gender equality (MacGregor, 2012). Until to date, gender inequality and disparity continues to persist. This has been attributed to several factors in literature as discussed by several authors in the years that have passed.

Research shows that gender inequalities caused by societal norms, practices and socialization has influenced the division of labour due to one’s biological make-

up and this is influencing the workplace which still favours male to female employees. Some authors have found that sexual stereotyping has played a big role in the socialization of women and men in society (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). The concept that women are still called housewives despite their engagement in the labour field seems to suggest that men and women simply divide different tasks by nature. Even the language in the society has been male than female-friendly. Women have tried to reject this historical and biological determinism of exploitative relationship between men and women because it explains it as an inborn condition hence beyond the scope of social change (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Mies (1998) brought up an argument that “anatomy as destiny was perhaps the most deep-rooted obstacle to the analysis of the causes of women’s oppression and exploitation” (Mies, 1998 p 45). Furthermore, it has been reported that the problem of gender inequality is different from country to country and from employment to employment or organization to organization (Wirth, 2004, p.8).

In Mali, Kane (2009) also advocated for decision making inclusiveness on policies and identified obstacles faced by women in authority (Kane, 2009). In 2012, In development, Hillary Clinton, the former Secretary of State of the USA who is an influential politician, was quoted by USAID in the article *Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy*, concerning decision making and development, saying that in order to achieve global development objectives, there is need for accelerated gender equality and empowering of the women (USAID 2012, p0).

In 2013, the lack of gender equality in the political decision-making process in Europe was discussed and it was followed up by the European Court of Justice developing legislation making direct and indirect gender discrimination unlawful in all legal systems of member states, (Selanec & Senden, 2013). All these pioneers

contribute to showing the importance of gender equality and the struggle against gender inequality in society and the workplace which has been ongoing for a long time. The persistence of gender inequality is seen considering the extent of advocacy for gender equality worldwide.

Recently, gender inequality persistence is also echoed in a study by Einarsdottir, (2018) on the lived experiences of women in the middle management level in Iceland. She stated that there has been three decades of seeking top management positions, but women are still encountering barriers at the workplace (Einarsdottir, 2018). This was similar to a study by Azuh and Amadu (2017) where they stated that “for over three decades, gender issues have been at the front burner of international summits” (Azuh & Amodu, 2017). All these efforts have been in pursuance to come up with a solution of obtaining gender equality and parity.

The United Nations (UN) has made great efforts to promote gender equality through the promulgation of different conventions and declarations. In 1979 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), held talks on platforms for gender equality and in 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action summit was held (Azuh & Amodu, 2017). Despite it all, the United Nations have also fallen short of the goal for gender equality in their organization. In the study by Chong in 2012, there was a call for the UN women to “walk the talk” and “structure its own gender practices and policies so as to promote gender equality” (Chong, 2012, p564). The United Nations had positive intentions but the practice was contrary in certain ways as it showed bias against women which would “remain a perpetual protracted paradox and a never-ending uphill battle if there was no change” (Chong, 2012, p564). Therefore, there have been calls for the UN to be a model of the gender equality they have been promoting for many years. The

United Nations failed to effectively make changes within its walls and eliminate the disproportionate representation of women in the UN system. Dag Hammarskjold of the UN library listed the name and gender of each UN Secretary-General which is the top position in the UN system. It shows that no woman has ever broken the glass ceiling to become the UN Secretary-General since its inception in 1945, (Hammarskjold UN library; Britannica Encyclopedia 2017). Even the process of their appointment does not promote a female UN Secretary-General. This is the epitome of gender inequality. Even the provision for an appointment, Article 97 of the UN Charter is discriminatory causing gender inequality (Urquhart & Childers, 1990). The highest decision-making UN body which is the Security Council has only males in their Unit whose duty in parts is the selection of the Secretary-General and their appointment goes unopposed using veto power. Even the European Union which provides for gender equality in their charter has not opposed the Security Council when it comes to the appointment of a Secretary-General being males alone. Hence despite the provisions, there is not yet nor has there ever been a UN Secretary-General who is a woman.

Another challenge is that despite the United Nations coming up with treaties and instruments that promote gender equality and ratifying them, governments interpret them differently, depending on their cultural and social belief systems (UN PASCA, 2014). The promulgation of the treaties, declarations, and conventions has not yet managed to change the face of gender inequality at the workplace. The African governments felt that this did not adequately address some of the cultural and social issues and challenges peculiar to the African continent hence they drafted and adopted their charter in 2005, the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa by African Union Member

Countries (UN PASCA, 2014). This was to ensure that the African challenges are contextually addressed to handle the African culture and social issues peculiar to the African continent. It also led to the regional declaration, the 1997 Southern African Development Community Countries (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development “to promote closer regional cooperation and collective action as a means of fostering gender equality”. The declaration was later elevated, in 2008, to a more binding instrument, SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. However, research has shown that gender inequality persists in Africa.

These 1995 and 1997 declarations were followed by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 of which goal three called for all countries to work together towards achieving gender equality. These expired in 2015 and as far as gender equality is concerned, in 2014, it was still very far from being achieved and women were still looked down upon as expressed by Nelson Mandela that as long as women are looked down upon pushing them into poverty, then there is lack of substance in Human Rights (UN PASCA, 2014). The human rights and the treaties lack substance as the gender inequality continues at home as well as at the workplace. Once people’s human rights are not respected, people are marginalized, minimized, undervalued, which leads to them losing their dignity. They are discriminated against, denied an opportunity to grow and develop by not participating at all levels like all others.

The MDGs and the Protocol to the African charter expired in 2015, and yet gender inequality continues to rage on leading to the formulation of new goals known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations. The SDGs which among its targets is achieving gender equality by 2030 has also provided for gender equality in providing decent work in its Goal no 5 and 8 (SDGs, 2030). The

UN recognizes that there is still gender inequality at the workplace (UNDP, 2013). Hence policies have been put in place at the workplace to promote equality among employees (Kayuni, 2017).

Likewise, in Africa, in the SADC 2008 protocol provisions, articles 12 – 19 were to ensure that 50% of decision-making positions in all public and private sectors are held by women. Yet gender inequality continues to take place in most of the countries, societies, workplaces and even in homes and 50% is yet to be achieved.

Biblical Christian Principles have not expressed contrary ideas to the international Human Rights and what the gender instruments provide. Human beings are born free and equal with dignity and rights. Religion is the foundation stone of all human rights documents that have come after it. The church believes that all human beings are made in the image of God hence they are equal (UN PASCA, 2014). Religion has in society been a champion of gender equality through raising awareness against different acts of gender violence such as female genital mutilation, child and early marriages (Belger, 2022). These are harmful practices, religions through awareness sessions tries to eliminate from the society. These practices are recognized as part of the gender-based violence that degrades women in society that religion has spoken against.

The Bible has laid foundation of Principles of human rights and gender equality as recorded in Genesis 1:26-28 which states that “and God created humankind in God’s image; in the image of God, God created them, male and female created he them”. It does not give greater importance or status to either men or women (UN PASCA, 2014), rather it connotes equality with dignity inferred. Equality in Ephesians 5:21 states that human beings should be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ and Galatians 3:26-28 states that in Jesus Christ, everyone is a

child of God and there is no Jew nor Greek, male or female, slave nor free for you are all one in Christ Jesus, (UN PASCA, 2014). Jesus in the Bible in John 10:10 stated that “the purpose of His life was to bring abundant life to all”. It was not to only half of the world’s population but everybody equally. Human Rights implies responsibilities each person has towards fellow human beings. This calls for individuals to ensure that as they carry out their business and actions, no one’s human rights are infringed upon or violated. Therefore, each person is charged with the responsibility to safeguard the human rights of all persons (UN PASCA, 2014). The Bible shows that there should be no discrimination as God is not partial and takes no bribe, He who executes justice fairly without favor, (Deut 10:17-19 & Gal 3:26-28).

Participation of women is recorded at all levels in the Bible. Such as the examples of Priscilla who was an active leader in the early church (Acts 18:18 & 26), Mary of Bethany, a worthy follower and learner at the foot of Jesus, (Luke 8: 1-3, Luke 10:39), first to get the task of proclaiming the risen Savior (John 20:4), Lydia the successful business merchant, among the early church leaders (Acts 16:42), she is also the first community member to show Paul hospitality (Acts 16:14-15), and, Phoebe, the responsible learned woman who served as courier for Paul’s letters (Romans 16:1). In the Old Testament, Miriam the unsolicited not-voted worship leader, classified as national leader alongside Aaron and Moses (Exod15:20, Micah 6:4), Deborah held court as Judge, Prophetess, and Military Chaplain to Israel’s army under Barak (Judg 4 & 5), Huldah the Prophetess played the leading role in National restoration (2Kgs 22), and Queen Esther’s, indelible fearless impact that is still reflected upon by Jews and non-Jews (The Book of Esther). There is also the case of the Samaritan woman who took it upon herself to bravely invite the men of the City to

come to see Jesus who told her all she ever did and affirm to her if this is not the Christ? (John 4:28 – 29, KJV).

This is evidence that God did not intend that gender inequality should reign but gender equality should be at all levels in society. This is evident with the daughters of Zelophehad and their inheritance right (Num 27:1-11) as constituted by God into law for Israel as a nation. Religion has been known to promote indiscrimination and equality for all.

On the other hand, the UN women reported that religion and gender equality is a complex issue. They have put it out that “religious actors fail to adequately challenge the structural determinants of gender inequality such as socio economic, political processes, education, culture” (Belger, 2022). The absence of women in the positions of religious authority seems to contribute to gender inequality by actually strengthening the patriarchal system and legitimizing discrimination against women (Belger, 2022). This has been attributed to the “centuries’ interpretation of the religions’ texts” which play an important role in a cultural and society context through social construction of gender roles, division of labour and the status of men and women in society (Belger, 2022). These seem to show that religious sector seems to be acting contrary to the biblical principles of equality. A report in the UN PASCA stated that religious beliefs are also a contributing factor to the discrimination against women (UN PASCA, 2014). It seems that just like the UN, in some instances, religion preaches what it does not practice too whether it is the Bible or Koran.

The Muslim community, emphasizes that all were created to be responsible for one another and look out for each other whether family or in the community “garments for one another” Quran 2:187 (Ahmed & Suleman 2018). According to the Muslim religion, each person has value by being human, and people should protect

and care for the other (Ahmed & Suleman, 2018). This stand can be used to challenge the ongoing gender discriminatory attitudes and practices.

As stated earlier, some religious leaders have spoken out against states, institutions and individual's actions that undermine people's human rights but they fail to take the necessary steps themselves. The Roman Catholic Church and several protestant churches openly spoke about including women in decision making but practice is contrary to what they advocate by the same church.

The Seventh Day Adventist church as far back as 1881, hindered women from being ordained as the general conference never voted for it when the motion was put across. This is the case until today with the results of the 2015 General Conference where it was stated that women are not to be ordained as it is an order against God's given roles for His church (Conroy, 2015). Ellen G White, whose writings are not considered to have the same authority as scripture, but are relied upon for comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction and the church acknowledges her prophetic gifts played a big role in advocating for women's pay and ordination as ministers. However, until her death she managed just to have women as deaconesses (Conroy, 2015) by threatening to withhold her tithe to pay these women who were housewives, working along with their husbands but without pay (Conroy, 2015). The spouses of the ministers are now offered remunerated jobs and work but the pay is lower than that of the husbands despite their qualifications. This is especially so with missionaries whose spouses are most of the times women are paid 50% less than their spouse.

To confirm the position that cultural factors have greater influence over the roles women played in the church (Conroy, 2015), a Nigerian study by Azuh (2017) asserts that Nigeria like any other developing country, women suffer from undue

discrimination, marginalization and exploitation by the menfolk through the implementation of culture, religion and traditional beliefs which place men as superhuman beings (Azuh & Amodu, 2017, p2). This is to show the influence of religion on gender equality. Being a potential vehicle for gender equality as it should originally be, it sometimes is resulting in gender inequality due to its traditional religious practices.

Even the language used in society is more tailored towards men. The English language which is used in schools also plays a part in reinforcing gender inequality by according the male gender a higher status as compared to the female gender (Subbo 2002; Davis & Mavisakalyan, 2018). Masculine words are made the roots of feminine words such as prince to princess, actor to actress just to mention a few. However, there are efforts to degenderize the English language to “desex” the language but it is a process that is also slow because it is part of the long-standing history difficult to discard (Subbo, 2002; Davis & Mavisakalyan, 2018). In Rwanda, even though women are more than men in parliament and seem to have gender equality, there is inequality persisting in the home and other areas where the male gender believe that gender equality is of the western world (Warner, 2018). This literature reveals that women are still oppressed at the workplace and in society. All this also shapes the division of labour at the workplace for career men and women. Therefore, this problem can be seen to manifest in different sectors of life including society, the workplace, politics and the religious sector.

Gender Disparity and Perceptions towards Gender Equality at the Workplace

Borrowing from the European Institute for Gender Equality definition, gender disparity in this paper refers to differences in access to resources, opportunities and

well-being, by individuals based on their gender which usually favour men and are often institutionalized through the law, justice and social norms (EIGE, 2016).

Gender-based stereotypes stemming from gender inequalities in the society are also a contributing factor to gender disparity as it affects the way access to employment, career development and decisions on job assignments and salaries are made at the work place. Lack of access to resources, opportunities, and wellbeing is experienced by women such as access to economic factors in the public arena. Women are still constrained from participating in some of the economic activities in the public arena and “the price of these constraints is paid not just by women themselves, but by society as a whole”, Mizrahi and Moleketi (2015a, p.26). These factors disadvantage female employees’ careers, giving rise to and sustaining gender inequality from recruitment to selection to promotion at the workplace (Foley et al, 2019) forming a vicious circle.

According to the UNDP (2013) report, very few countries had reached gender parity in 2013 with certain sectors defeminizing women both at the workplace or professionally (p175). It is also important to note that it is becoming a concern, especially where men are being disempowered and women are being defeminized at the workplace especially in the industrial arena (UNDP, 2013). At the same time, women’s access to employment in the industrial sector has also declined relative to men (UNDP, 2013). This trend holds in all regions of the world. It would appear that a global “DE feminization” of industrial employment is underway (UNDP, 2013). This is significant since jobs in this sector tend to be of higher quality than those in other services (UNDP, 2013, p183). This DE feminization has been observed in the industrial arena especially in countries where feminization had taken place in the 1980

and 1990s (UNDP 2013) p. 175. This is one of the indications of the persistence of gender disparity at the work place.

UNDP 2013 report stated that any approach in analyzing global trends in gender equality must be cognizant of the fact that not all gender disparities favour men (UNDP, 2013). There has been an observation of worrying trends on gender reversals. In some countries male average years of education and secondary enrolment rates now are falling below that of females. In some countries, female relative employment opportunities have occurred in the context of declining opportunities in male employment rates and thus the narrowing of the gaps is gender conflictive with potentially negative effects on relationships at the household level, such as family breakups and family domestic violence (UNDP, 2013, p182).

Furthermore, other studies have shown backlash occurring in places where improvements have been made, (UNDP, 2013). UNDP reports that in certain cases, women are now being eliminated from their hard-earned achievements in gender equality at the workplace. There was a time when women engineers were given support and mentored, however, today the opposite is happening as reported by UNDP stating that “women’s access to employment in the industrial sector had declined in the world...” despite parity in education (UNDP, 2013, p198).

Some have suggested that the causes of gender inequality reversals require an investigation as this is a possible cause of the gender inequality that is still raging on. It could be due to males’ unwillingness to compete with females in a space that males had previously dominated which could also be leading to resistance to policies that promote gender equality (UNDP, 2013, p. 163). In its report, UNDP (2013) reported that “If improvement in women’s empowerment does indeed come at the expense of men’s power, this should be a cause for concern” (UNDP, 2013, p. 177).

Politically, in some countries, women are denied access to participation in simple universally acknowledged human rights of voting nor are women allowed into decision making processes even when such decisions concerns issues that govern collective lives and women included. (UN PASCA, 2014). A UNDP report also confirmed that the state of women's share of parliamentary seats being raised only in a few countries as other countries continue to have no female political representation (UNDP, 2013). This trend continued to be observed in the UNDP report (2015) on the millennium goals where it was reported that despite the small improvement which could be noted, there were still significant gaps between men and women labour force, which in 2015 showed that 50% of women eligible to work who are 15 and above participated as compared to 77% of men (U.N. 2015). Women still face difficulties to enter paid work and when they do, they receive lower wages which are 24% less than men globally and in sub-Saharan countries are 30%. This is despite their equivalences in education (U.N. 2015). The report sites barriers which contribute to limiting women's employment as, household responsibilities and cultural constraints (U.N. 2015). In the case of Rwanda, it is stated that there is gender inequality being experienced at household the household responsibilities despite the political participation parity limiting women from advancing with their careers (This is Rwanda, 2019).

Reiterated in a research paper by Charmes, (2019), this is being experienced among females and males at home and workplaces. The paper reported that women have less access to the labour market because they spend 75% of their time on unpaid work which compromises their time for paid labour work or job. In their research, Charmes, (2019) found no country where men and women shared an equal amount of unpaid work (Charmes, 2019).

There is the wage gap where female employees continue to be underpaid in their jobs despite equal education or position with their male employee counterparts, (Hirsh, 2013, p 412). “Women have been denied the rights of equality as men continue to earn more than women for the same work done” (UN PASCA, 2014, p87). In many countries, progress in closing gender wage gaps has been very slow despite the observed elimination of the gaps in education (UNDP, 2013, p183). Closing the education gap seems not to close the wage gap at the workplace. “Clearly, educational parity is not sufficient for securing gender parity in employment” (UNDP, 2013, p169). The wage gap is one of the indications of how women are viewed differently at the workplace where a female worker in the same position as a man receives a lower salary.

Yavorsky and Dill (2020) in their study found that most male designated jobs that were highly paid are disappearing while female designated jobs such as nursing are increasing. They also found that even though the wages for female designated jobs is increasing, there are still more females entering the male designated jobs than men entering female designated jobs (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). Clarifying the reluctance of men to enter the female designated jobs is not about the wages but to meet the expectations of the society, because anything different comes along with socially undesired dishonour or blemish of masculinity assuming feminine roles in society. This probably is the reason that even though there are some feminine jobs with high wages, men’s entry remains low at 13% (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). They conclude that the increase of the wages in the female designated jobs is to cater for the deficiency that men would face leaving masculine highly paid jobs to low paying female designated jobs, (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). Nevertheless, men are still reluctant to take up female designated jobs. They may be bound to support gender equality but

at the same time, mount obstacles for the females to achieve the same. Social expectations seem to override the accommodation of women in male designated jobs just as well as males getting into female designated jobs even though some of them are highly paid. Social-cultural values take precedence over pay rise in female designated jobs for men (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). The authors' recommendation that raising wages in female designated jobs in order to capture men in this area, is also far-fetched. Removing the stigma attached to female designated jobs would probably be more effective. This is because, despite the rise in salary, men still leave the jobs due to the pressure of society which is heavily interwoven with culture to be able to easily remove the stigma masculinity fears in the job.

Aspinall (2021) posted on the online magazine Gazia UK, a list of 10 countries where it was stated that women are absolutely discouraged from participating in voting. The reasons given vary with the different countries, ranging from; religious taboo and cultural barriers, societal and religious taboo, cultural segregation between men and women, traditional roles and segregation of duties, cultural conflicts and distance to polling booth, traditional dress codes, sexist opinion that "women are less capable" and "coercion to vote along the lines of husband's preference or face divorce" (Aspinall, 2021, p. 1).

It is also reported in a 2020 Global gender report stating that it will take another 99.5 years before we see gender equality. A year later, the 2021 global gender report increased the years to 153.6 years due to the impact COVID 19 has had on women (Bateman & Ross, 2020). Women have been more affected by COVID 19 than men because most women are found in lower-paying jobs which were deemed non-essential during the COVID 19 pandemic (Bateman and Ross, 2020). This has led to many women losing their employment hence increasing the gender inequality that

was already staggering to parity. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has also acknowledged that there has been a difference in the COVID 19 impact on the jobs between men and women where women have been affected more than men. According to ILO, “The inequalities between women and men in the world of work, that has been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic will persist in the near future” (ILO, 2021, p. 1). For instance, in Africa, 0.1% of the men have been affected as compared to 1.9% of employed women being affected by COVID 19 (ILO, 2021, p. 2). This shows that more women have experienced the loss of employment thereby increasing gender inequality at the workplace. Recently, in 2023 the UN Secretary general spoke about gender equality gap widening before our eyes and affecting everyone, and the years increased to 300 years. Antonio Guterres declared at the commencement of Commission on the Status of Women which is a U.N.’s global body that it promoting gender equality. He stated that the progress which has been achieved over the past decades is diminishing because “the patriarchy is fighting back.” (United Nations, 2023). This just shows the reversal in the progress towards gender equality. A study can be done to understand this reversal phenomenon and looking at a shift in analysis from women to men’s behaviour.

Culture and Perceptions towards Gender Equality at the Workplace

In most African countries, the problems that affect women seem to be largely cultural. In Kenya, Subbo (2002) and Kameri-Mbote (2003) have discussed gender inequality emanating from cultural and social settings. In their discussions, the term gender is a social construct that not only asserts the social expectation and responsibilities of men and women but also determine society roles one has to play which creates and reinforces relationships of male dominance and female

subordination even in the workplace (Subbo, 2002 & Kameri-Mbote, 2003). There are patterns of behaviour and activities that are viewed as appropriate or inappropriate for women and men due to the social and cultural constructs acquired through socialization in a cultural setting. From the time children are born, they are socialized into different roles based on their being female or male. In society, the child is rewarded when his or her behaviour is seen as sex appropriate, and, ridiculed or reprimanded when they deviate from the established cultural norms. The world uses symbols that have meaning and value to what males and females should be and some of these symbols are used to communicate in society. Some toys are targeted for boys and those targeted for girls. These toys instill the role of an individual as they grow up playing their socially created role. This results in a gender-based division of labour where duties are allocated based on one's gender and have been carried over to the workplace hence affecting the careers of most women. For instance, the female gender is allocated duties such as cooking, washing and other domestic chores which belong to the private (domestic) sector and not the public domain; this results in the social construction of maleness and femaleness.

The role of women develops from the cultural beliefs that place them in a subordinate position where they are not involved in the decision-making process. A girl child is under strict protection of the father, uncle or brother as the males are given responsibility for all the females in the family. It has been reported that many women are denied their human rights and remain in subordinate positions in their homes and their families. Certain cultural practices require girls to go through degrading and humiliating processes for men's sake and to satisfy society's expectations. For instance, the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is widely practiced in certain areas of Africa and it is connected with married life because the woman

who goes through it is considered suitable for marriage as a result the practice is forced on the girls by their parents despite the devastating side effects it has (Namweya, 2005). In some of the African culture, widowed women are under the guardianship of their sons or are married off to their husband's direct brother (UN PASCA 2014). Worse still, many women are subjected to "sexual harassment" such as rape and FGM (UN PASCA 2014). These are forms of acts that degrade a woman thereby contributing to their feeling of inferiority in society. Rwanda has embraced a strategy of involving both males and females in advocating for gender equality while focusing on their traditional patriarchal systems which they have considered to be part and parcel of the existing gendered roles whose distribution of roles places the women in the subordinate place to men, (Carlson, & Randell, 2013). This literature shows that there is still inequality due to the traditional patriarchy that make women feel inferior and subordinate both at the home and workplace.

In "This is Africa", Chatora (2015) and in "Nyasa times online news", Muheya (2015) reported that FGM was silently being practiced in Malawi. The 2018 Orchid Project Malawi Report stated that though FGM is being practiced, it is difficult to find statistics of the practice because of the secrecy surrounding the traditional practice. The degrading and humiliating practice on women is still in practice even today. All this is done for the sake of men portraying the patriarchal expectation of male dominance. As a result, girls and women are looked down upon as inferior beings. Women and girls are more likely marginalized and abused sexually at work and in school, causing them to be timid and unsure of themselves. Therefore, some parents have the preference for all girls' schools where girls can learn without having to compete with societies patriarchal expectations of male dominance (Mzumara, 2019).

This is a position also taken by the radical feminists who use social construction as a source of gender inequality. They view society as dominated by men which results in women's oppression and they consider men their enemy in society (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). These controversies put sexuality, reproduction and patriarchy at the center of the political arena where gender inequality is concerned (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Production of new life and its milk is considered natural for a woman with no economic benefits to it and yet it is more labouring and developing to the society; it is also termed social reproduction. During this period, women would have lost years of career development. Some studies also believe that reproductive years should not hinder women from career development despite their being home. The belief should be that gender, production, reproduction, and patriarchy are all part of the social life and there is production in the biological sense and also products such as labour, employment and technology (Kameri-Mbote, 2003; Zhivka, 2020).

On the contrary, patriarchy in society has been seen as a specific form of dominance based on the powerful role of the father figure and male supremacy which results in oppression of women in most of the social systems where there is a rigid division of labour (Kameri-Mbote, 2003; Zhivka, 2020). In this case, oppression is described as a position where women are denied appropriate and same education or training opportunities which results in differences at the workplace with regards to job assignments or promotions (Kameri-Mbote, 2003; Stamarski, & Son Hing, 2015). Globally, language continues to be used in a manner that discriminates both in society and the workplace. Words such as aggressive, bossy, hardness, efficiency, toughness, sharpness and resistance are all qualities ascribed to males whereas women are supposed to be compassionate, soft-spoken, tender and weaker (always seeking help) qualities of which are of a subordinate person and in this case a woman (Subbo, 2002;

Grobman, (2019). The male ascribed words used on a female are negatively construed and the female ascribed words used on a male are negatively construed.

Looking at the trends above, this is the beginning of power relations as it depicts how power as a concept of gender has been used by its possessors to oppress the weaker gender (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Women have been marginalized and given second class treatment in society. Their ideas are considered lesser than those of men and are often ignored. This is replicated even in the homes where men have been viewed as breadwinners fending for their family whereas women as housewives are recipients of what the man fends making them dependent on men. Therefore, men have progressed economically in society due to the exposure and leaving women economical dependent and undeveloped in the homes.

Age and Perceptions towards Gender Equality at the Workplace

Age bias leading to gender inequality and disparity has also been discussed in some literature which has shown inconsistencies. Some studies have found that with age there is decline in performance and yet other studies have found that older women perform better than the young ones because they have job satisfaction which makes them perform better at the workplace (Wilks & Neto, 2013). A Chittoor Sugar company in India reported that age and gender directly affect performance and that the older one gets, the less performing a person and yet at the same time found that female employees are more productive than male workers (Kotur & Anbazhagan, 2014). In another 2014 study by Gander (2014), it was stated that the organizations' perception was that women disappear from employment through reproduction and child rearing responsibilities (Gander, 2014). Childbearing and child-rearing women

also face gender inequality and disparity due to their lower ages and receive fewer opportunities than the senior women and childless women forcing them to leave the workforce (Wooll, 2021).

A Nigerian study by Umesi (2021), shows that age and gender of the employees influence the organization's decision-making processes. In its report he elaborated that the organization when considering training, looks at the age of the employee and for women considers their reproduction period which becomes an obstacle at that time (Umesi, 2021). In a study by Ammerman and Groysberg (2021), it was quoted that a male executive in one of the major investment banks said that senior women are few, which also affects the number of women in senior positions than the out of colleges young girls who are not yet ready to take up senior positions. There is a more balanced distribution of roles and a balanced representation at the lower level of men and women than in senior positions at the bank. This affects the decision-making process already as the decision-making levels are dominated by men. The decisions have continued to boost gender inequality at the workplace as women spokespersons are few or not represented at all in some cases. Another study stated that women at the workplace suffered both age and gender discrimination terming it "double jeopardy" whereas men suffer age only (Wilks & Neto, 2013) probably contributing to the number of older women at work places.

Childbearing and child-rearing women also face gender inequality and disparity due to their lower ages and fewer opportunities than the senior women and childless women forcing them to leave the workforce (Wooll M., 2021).

Furthermore, the literature has shown that the age at which gender inequality is experienced most is the younger age for the boys and the middle age for the women which causes young female employees to leave their jobs (Wilks & Neto, 2013;

Umesi, 2021) paving way for continued inequality at the workplace. As discussed, age is not the determining factor but the reproduction and child rearing role is the reason for the discrimination and the cause for women abandoning their careers. This also affects the decision-making process already as the decision-making levels are dominated by men (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019). The decisions have continued to boost gender inequality at the workplace as women spokespersons are few or not represented at all in some cases.

Gender and Perceptions towards Gender Equality at the Workplace

For a long time, gender inequality has taken up the face of a woman where gender equality referred to women being discriminated against in society or women being the most participants of studies pertaining to gender inequality or equality EIGE, (2023). A 2004 study by Wirth had its study on women who were participating in leadership positions hence the data collected was only on women as displayed in the report (Wirth, 2004). In 2012, a study was conducted on culture and gender inequality and psychological perceptions whose participants were 40 Hong Kong Chinese women and 48 European women (Kim & Kinias, 2012). A more recent study by Garcia (2019) with a sample size of 1,259 to 1,287 respondents (n = 455 to 467 for men and n = 804 – 821 for women) which shows that the sample of women participants were twice than that of men (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019). From the 18th century, the studies have been about girls and women empowerment. The society has thought about it as being a topic for women because it was deemed to affect women only (EIGE, 2023). However, it is reported in various studies that men also are victims of gender inequality when they are found to be acting or performing duties contrary to the expectations of the society cultural values (EIGE, 2023). Therefore,

men are found in a compromising situation when it comes to gender inequality at the workplace or society in general EIGE, (2023). Hence, men fall victims of the same, causing them to become defensive of their position in society as per the expected cultural norms in the society (EIGE, 2023).

As discussed above, it all begins at an early stage, when a boy or a girl learns what it means to be a boy or a girl in their society (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Through socialization in a cultural context of origin, a female child is taught certain tasks which they should carry out and a boy likewise (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). If the boys do what a girl should do would be ridiculed for doing a girl's job likewise if it is a girl for acting like a boy (Subbo, 2002 & Kameri-Mbote, 2003). This informs the way females and males interact with those of the opposite gender and how they themselves behave in society. In 2013 UNDP acknowledged the theory of gender stratification indicating that another key factor in gender inequality is unequal bargaining power at the household level (UNDP, 2013, p182). This is the theory which ranks men higher in society than women. The UNDP (2013) has indicated its relevance and significance because the household level is determined by its context and culture. This may contribute to the different responses gender equality gets at the workplace (UNDP, 2013, p182). The UNDP also finds that the household gender roles and workplace gender equality issues are related to each other and both should be considered when dealing with the issue of gender equality at the workplace.

As earlier discussed, Ganders (2014) study shows that the female gender is affected by gender equality and disparity by accessing fewer opportunities at the work place because of their gender. Their nature by birth affecting their access to opportunities at the work place which he termed as "unconscious bias" which later ILO defined as below. A report from ILO in 2017 described unconscious bias as

“unintentional and automatic mental association based on gender stemming from traditions, norms, values, culture and experiences” (ILO, 2017, p3). These automatic associations which are a result of enculturation influence the decision-making, enabling quick assessment of individuals by others in accordance with their gender and gender stereotypes (ILO, 2017 p3). The Nigerian study by Umesi (2021), showed earlier that gender of the employees influence the organization’s decision-making processes by taking into account their reproduction period which becomes an obstacle at that time (Umesi, 2021).

In research by Chipeta (2023) she also noted that unconscious gender bias exists at all levels in an organization denying women’s voice in key decision-making processes (Chipeta, 2023). However, this unconscious gender bias affects both male and female decision makers who as a result place people into categories such as age and gender. In one case a female employee who after two days of telling her employer of her risky pregnancy, she received an unexpected voicemail from her female Chief Executive Officer dismissing her from employment (Carter, 2022). The decision of a male senior manager or female senior manager in an organization is affected by this unconscious gender bias. Unfortunately, gender bias sometimes results in unfair decisions being made in connection with gender equality at the workplace. This is in agreement with the study of Gander which concluded that gender influences perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace (Gander, 2014).

Gender influencing perceptions at the workplace by Gander 2014 is echoed in a research institution study by Garcia-Gonzalez, Forcein and Jimenez-Sanchez (2019) when their report stated that men and women differ in their perceptions of gender bias (Garcia-Gonzalez et al, 2019). In this study, there were differing perceptions about gender equality where women see gender inequality being practiced in the institution

and men responded not seeing gender inequality being practiced in the same institution. This was perceived as an obstacle towards gender equality at the workplace with more men in senior positions, not finding it necessary to promote gender equality in the institution (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019). The 2019 Spanish study by Garcia-Gonzalez et al (2019) acknowledged that females and males grow up with perceptions of who a man or woman is and what is their position in society (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019). Therefore, Charmes, 2019 attributed this to stereotyping and socialization bringing about social constructs on the different roles of men and women in the society (Charmes, 2019), hence the shaping of the behavior and attitude.

This is also the early beginnings of the division of labour in society, spelling out what a male should do and not do and what a female should do and not do attributing it to nature (Charmes, 2019). These perceptions continue to exist in the minds of the individuals as they interact in different circles of life in the society. These perceptions and stereotyping begin in the families; find their way into the national decision-making bodies, workplace boardrooms and at the workplace perpetuating gender inequalities and disparities towards employees.

Gender roles that are socially constructed and divided seem to be deep-rooted as they present themselves at the workplace. A 2019 Australian study concluded that gender bias is still “pervasive” at the workplace resulting in gender inequalities at all levels in the employment cycle (Foley et al, 2019). These gender-based stereotypes affect the selection of candidates to be recruited for particular roles and eliminating others based on their gender, how salaries are negotiated, how managers provide feedback to their employees, and which employees receive career development opportunities and motivation for career progress (Foley et al, 2019). A Nigerian study by Umesi (2021), showed that gender was taken into consideration when making

decisions for the employees becoming an obstacle for women and their career development (Umesi, 2021).

Moreover, these gender-based stereotypes results in men working in female designated jobs at the workplace to encounter social pressure (Charmes, 2019). The men would want to identify with the socially constructed expected male jobs to guard off against “social stigma” (Torre, 2019). Similarly, the women entering the public labour are deemed to have left their socially designated role at home. These women in order to succeed have to work extra hard like a man so her femininity is unseen (Gander, 2014). This type of woman will be known as a man-like woman and stereotyped against in society and making her to give up the efforts (Gander 2014). This applies to all, despite age, level of education, family background or field of study which were in the demographics Torre used in her study (Torre, 2019).

In her report, (Vernier, 2018) stated that gender inequalities are especially blatant at the workplace where on average women are more likely to work part-time, be employed in low-paid jobs and not take on management positions (Verniers, 2018; OXFAM International, 2018). As a result, women are seldomly consulted in connection with major decision making. This leads to having a shortage of women in top positions, thus upholding the status quo and strengthening the image of men being better suited for the highest managerial positions. Wirth observed that the meagre share of professional jobs for women and the strategic positions leading to executive positions are mostly assigned to male employees with women dominating in the support staff section (Wirth, 2004). In 2018, it was noted as still a problem as it leads to having women’s hard work and diligence going unappreciated (Einarsdottir, 2018).

It is also reported by Foley (2019) that challenging assignments at the workplace are dominated by male employees ascribing it to “protecting” the female

employees which resonates with the cultural gender norms (Foley, 2019). This results into female employees' career development and progress being affected as they miss out on opportunities hence lowering their motivation to perform and hope for better job opportunities and growth (Foley, 2019). The above literature indicates gender contributes to gender inequality and gender disparity at the workplace which affects work performance.

The presence of policies created in favour of gender equality has led to even more gender inequality such as alternative work arrangements for women, job sharing, part-time work or flexible hours. Building a career with a part-time job is very difficult (Straus, 2018, p6; Verniers, 2018). The career growth is therefore going to be affected. This inequality in organizations is also seen when women are expected to adopt masculine characteristics to break the glass ceiling and access the top executive positions (Johns, 2013). Women are also engaged in a lot of unpaid work in the home such as caring for their husbands and children, as well as, the extended family members and visitors in African culture (UN PASCA, 2014; Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Housework is not viewed as work in male-dominated societies because it is not remunerated for (Mies, 1998; Zhivka, 2020).

Women have been meeting with ministers and government authorities in the Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (WAMM) forum to discuss the way forward to gender equality. This forum is held every three years since 1985 and provides the opportunity for ministers, senior officials, civil society, the private sector and partner agencies to explore and agree on workable strategies and solutions to gender disparities.

Education and Perceptions towards Gender Equality at the Workplace

Gender equality and gender equity discussions are usually in terms of women without considering the plight of men whose education placed them on a better position in society. From as early as possible education has been considered and used to bring about intended gender equality among men and women. Therefore, education has been used as a vessel for gender equality even from the 18th century as propagated by Mary Wallstonecraft. She took education as a channel to gender equality. This has been implemented in many countries globally and it has been yielding different results. A Kenya study reported that by providing education preferences for women, parity is being achieved in education (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). In some countries, education parity has been reached and gender equality has also been achieved such as Rwanda and Iceland. A European country, Iceland is almost closing its education gap at .99 where 1 means 100% closure of the education parity. The education gap is closing and gender equality is also closing (Whiting, 2022). Further studies revealed that the turning point for Iceland was when women went on strike in 1970 showing the men that there is value in motherhood and that they cannot do without motherhood (Whiting, 2022) who referred to the author of the book *The motherhood Penalty* by Joeli Brearley. Another author supported this stand commenting that Motherhood penalty attributed to 80% of the gender pay gap. In her findings, it is found that by the age of 42, full time career mothers with children were earning 11% less than mothers without children (Carter, B., 2022). Rwanda too has topped Sub Saharan Africa in education parity and gender equality on the Global Gender Gap Report of 2022. Rwanda scored .96 in education attainment which 1 is also 100%. It is also first in gender equality in Africa since 2014 (Whiting, 2022). However, the 2022 report has shown a drop in tertiary education only by 2.9% (Whiting, 2022).

In other countries, the contrary is true where education parity has been reached but gender equality has not been achieved. Looking at the literature, it is clear that the most countries that are topping the gender equality index are the western countries as listed in the 2022 report with Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and New Zealand being on top of the list (Whiting K. 2022) but still the despite all the progress gender parity in the labour force is at 62.9%, the lowest level registered since the index was first compiled (Zahidi S., 2022). According to the Equileap study (Equileap report, 2021, p 12) African countries are far from achieving gender equality in terms of pay gap. The 2003 question remains as posed by Kameri-Mbote (2003), as to why despite parity in education, there is still inequality at the workplace (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Gender inequality seems to persist as discussed in the literature above.

Malawi is one of the countries where education was adopted to promote gender equality. As a result, primary school enrolment rate is higher for girls at 97,1% and 92% for boys as well as the secondary school level where girls are 34.8% and boys at 33.7% (HSRC, 2021) p3. Even though Malawi has progressed well in the primary and secondary school enrolment, the tertiary education enrolment is lower for girls with .6% whereas boys are at 1% (HSRC, 2021) p. 3. Research has shown that culture and preference for male education is one of the causes for decrease in the tertiary education (HSRC, 2021; Azcona, 2008). Harmful practices that are still taking place like early marriages prevent many girls from continuing with the education (World Bank, 2017). Mzuzu being a patriarchal dominated section of the country (Mpoola, 2011), there is education preference for male child as it is for a girl child so that where resources are limited, preference is made for a male child to continue with school and the girl to prepare for marriage thereby making a difference at the employment entry point (World Bank, 2017) In the HSRC (2021) Malawi Profiling

report stated that women's labour force participation is lower at 73.9% than men at 80.9% and this parity gap widens further in the area of senior positions at the workplace with women at 15.6% compared to men at 84.4% (HSRC, 2021) p. 3. According to the literature, education has not allowed gender equality to progress to improve in Malawi. Despite all the progress indicated in the Global Gender Equality Index, parity globally in the labour force still stands at 62.9%, and the lowest level registered since the index was first compiled (Zahidi, 2022).

Work Performance and Perceptions about Gender Equality

As early as in the 1980's a study presented a strong relationship between organizations promotions of women in leadership and managerial positions and work performance. The impact was found to be positive (Johns, 2013). Similarly in 2004, findings of a study by a Catalyst company found that there was a relationship between gender diversity in top management and better financial performance of the organization (Catalyst. 2004). In Europe companies which had a strong representation of women in decision making positions outperformed others (McKinsey 2007). In 2011, Dezso and Ross had the same findings which show that really gender and work performance had a relationship. A Chilean study found that there was a relationship between gender equality and productivity of an organisation which it attributed to encouragement due to gender equality (Wu & Cheng, 2016). and Lydell H. Hall (2018) reported that work performance is affected by gender inequality and disparity at the workplace (Hall, 2018). One study by Triana, Jayasinghe, Pieper, Delgado, and Li, (2019), found that there was a correlation in the organization between work performance and gender-based discrimination from cultural practices resulting in gender inequality. A study was carried out by Yavorsky and Dill, (2020) who reported

lack of job satisfaction for women and men who found themselves in jobs that were not of their gender role (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020).

Men who found themselves in female gendered role jobs even though highly paying, left out of dissatisfaction because of the stereotyping and stigmatization connected with the job (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). Young female employees who entered the career threshold soon were met with gendered obstacles which prevented them from exercising their full potential leading to job dissatisfaction and high turnovers of the young female employees (Wilks & Neto, 2013; Umesi, 2021). In support of the earlier studies, the Nigerian study by Umesi (2021), concluded that age and gender influence staff job performance. In its report he elaborated that the organization when considering training, looks at the age of the employee and for women considers their reproduction period which becomes an obstacle at that time (Umesi, 2021). This seems to explain the happy female younger employees that decreases in the middle age from the work force with high rates of turnovers which results in less but happy older women with more favorable attitudes towards work (Wilks & Neto, 2013; Umesi, 2021).

Research by Wooll M (2021), a recruiter reported that there is high turnover among women as compared to hiring them. Therefore, hiring women is not a problem but retaining them at the workplace, as women leave jobs because of low job satisfaction as well as not being treated fairly (Wooll M., 2021). In workplaces where women are in top positions, the turnover is less which is attributed to their feeling of hopefulness in attaining the senior position as well the reduced sexual harassment. Furthermore, where a worker feels appreciated, they will work their best and the organization will benefit (Daga., 2023).

It can be observed that from the literature above, job dissatisfaction and satisfaction contributed to the work performance hence linking it to the organization's productivity. The above studies purport to show that gender inequality and gender disparity affects work performance at the workplace.

The Case of Malawi

Kayuni (2017) stated that Malawi's support for women's rights and opportunities is strong among both men and women in both rural and urban areas. Yet the significant minorities, about 1 in 3 citizens say gender equality is not yet a reality when it comes to getting a job or owning land (Kayuni, 2017, p. 11). He found in his study that gender-based discrimination still affects a substantial number of women (Kayuni, 2017, p. 11).

The promulgation of the treaties, declarations, conventions in Malawi have not yet managed to change the face of gender inequality at the workplace. Malawi's support for gender equality dates back to 1979 upon its ratification of the CEDAW, an instrument intended to remove discrimination against women in all spheres of life (Malawi Law Commission, 2011). Section 20 of the Malawi constitution attributed its definition of discrimination from the CEDAW, it stated;

Any distinction, exclusion or preference which is based on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms (Nyirenda, 2017, p. 112).

Following the constitution which is the supreme law of the land, and the key international legal instruments (CEDAW, Africa Union Women's protocol and the

1995 Beijing Declaration), Malawi developed several national policies to eliminate all forms of discrimination. Such policies included: the 1997 Malawi National Plan for Action, the 2000 National Gender Policy and the 2005 National Gender Programme to promote and ensure implementation of the National Gender Policy. This has led to organizations in Malawi coming up with laws and policies against gender inequality and yet gender inequality continues to reign (Kayuni, 2017).

Gender inequality is widespread in Malawi, where women are undermined or looked down upon socially and even at the workplace (Mzumara, 2019). In addition, Malawi's customary law considers a boy child more important in a family as men are a source of property to the family. This affects women socially as well as professionally as was found in the research done in Mzuzu (Mzumara, 2019). It all contributes to the way women feel and behave and as a result, affects their careers due to the continued persistence of gender inequality.

Table 1 is Echoing the United Nations report (2015) and is an extract from the 2015 Malawi Millennium Report by UNDP.

Table 1. Malawi's Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

STATUS AT A GLANCE					
Malawi's Progress towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals					
GOAL/TARGET	INDICATOR	BASELINE (2000)	CURRENT STATUS	2015 TARGET	Feasibility of Achieving the Goal
Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger	Proportion of population living below US\$1.00 per person per day (%)	53.9	50.7	27	Unlikely to be Met
	Poverty Gap Ratio (%)	18.6	18.9	0	
	Proportion of Ultra Poor (%)	10	5.5	20	
	Prevalence of Underweight Children (%)	25.4	16.7	14	
	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (%)	23.6	25.7	100	
Achieve Universal Primary Education	Net Enrolment in Primary (%)	78	79.5	100	Unlikely to be Met
	Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 Reaching Grade 5 (%)	69	64	100	
	Literacy Rate (15-24yrs) (%)	68.1	75.2	100	
Promote Gender Equity and Empower Women	Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary Education	0.91	1.01	1	Unlikely to be Met
	Ratio of Girls to Boys in Secondary Education	0.60	0.85	1	
	Ratio of Literate Women to Men 15 – 24 Years Old	0.82	0.93	1	
	Share of Women in Wage Employment in non-Agriculture Sector (%)	13.1	30.1	50	
	Proportion of Seats Held by Women in Parliament (%)	9.3	16.6	50	
Reduce Child Mortality	Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000)	189	85	78	Likely to be Met
	Infant Mortality rate (per 1,000)	103	53	44.7	
	Proportion of 1 year children immunized against measles (%)	83.2	85	95.3	
Improve Maternal Health	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000)	1120	601	155	Unlikely to be Met
	Proportion of births attended to by skilled health personnel (%)	55.6	87.4	100	
Ensure Environmental Sustainability reverse loss of environmental resources	Proportion of land covered by forest (%)	37.9	36.2	50	Likely to be Met
	Proportion of area protected to maintain biological diversity (%)	0.16	0.16	0.18	
	Proportion of population using solid fuel (%)	97.9	98.3	0	
	Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source	47	86.2	74	
	Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation (%)	81.4	95.2	86.2	
	Slum population as percentage of urban population	92	65.1	-	
Develop Global Partnership for Development	Net ODA as a percentage of Real Gross Domestic Product	12	21.34	-	Likely to be Met
	Unemployment of 15 – 24 year old (urban)	9	27.5	-	
	Telephone lines subscribers per 100 population	1.18	0.8	-	
	Cellular subscribers per 100 population	0.57	41.24	-	
	Internet users per 1,000 population	0.07	25.1	-	

Source: MDHS,2000,2004; LFS 2010, MES 2014

Table 1 from the Malawi Millenium report shows that gender inequality continued to persist from 2014 despite the progress it had shown in the past and by 2015, the Malawi Millennium goal was not met (U.N. 2015).

Table 2 is Malawi's achievements of the MDGs in the education, employment and political sector by 2015.

Table 2. MDGs Malawi's Achievement of Gender Equality

GOAL 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Indicator	Baseline (2000)	MDG Target	Achieve ment
Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary Education	0.91	1.00	1.001
Ratio of Girls to Boys in Secondary Education	0.60	1.00	0.88
Ratio of Literate Women to Men 15 – 24 Years Old	0.82	1.00	0.92
Share of Women in Wage Employment in non-Agriculture Sector (%)	13.1	50	30.1
Proportion of Seats Held by Women in Parliament (%)	9.3	50	16.6

Source: MDHS, 2000, 2004; LFS 2010, MES 2014

Table 2 shows the goals which were set to be met by 2015 and for share of employment and parliamentary seats, by 2014 was below the target goals. This shows the persistent of gender inequality in Malawi.

Figure 2 is the situation with regard to wage factor in the non-agriculture sector in Malawi by the deadline for MDG.

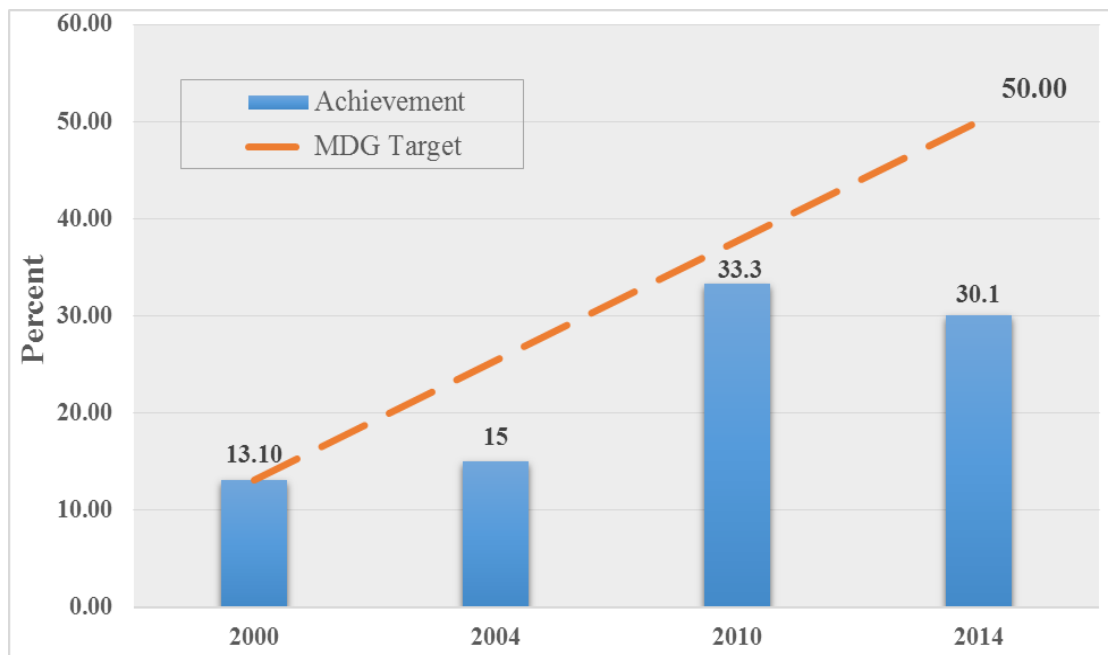


Figure 2. Share of women in Wage Employment in the Non-Agricultural Sector
Source: MDHS, 2000, 2004; LFS 2010, MES 2014

Figure 2 shows that the target which was set at 50% by the 2014 expiry date for the MDGs, was found to be at 30.1% by 2014 and this was a drop from 2010 which was by then at 33.3%.

From the constitution, Malawi has legalized gender equality through the enactment of its Gender Equality Act of 2013. Prima facie, it looks like there is progress to gender equality although gender inequality is still prevalent in Malawi. As cited by Adolfsson and Madsen (2020), despite the progress in the legal framework, socially, most of the unpaid work is done by women which signifies their inferior social position. Furthermore, their involvement in work sectors dominated by men does not guarantee that the burden of labour without pay which they do at home will be alleviated. Political power in Malawi is culturally inclined towards men and works for the “detriment of women’s political empowerment” (OXFAM, 2015, p. 18). Malawi has signed several international obligations and treaties. Hofstede in 1980 stated that masculine traits tend to maximize the difference between what either men

or women are expected to do focusing on gender roles (Jandt, 2006). Furthermore, “Malawi has a fairly progressive legal framework on gender inequality, but the de facto norms derived from culture seem to supersede the de jure provisions” (Mussa & Masanjala, 2015, p 6). Despite the local, international commitments and the 50-50 campaigns, in 2014 the number and proportion of women in Parliament declined from 43 to 32, representing a fall from 22.28% to 16.58%” (Mussa & Masanjala, 2015, p18).

In Malawi, gender discrimination still affects a substantial number of women (Kayuni, 2017) which sees the persistence of gender inequality. Politically also, in Malawi, the number of female members of parliament has fluctuated. There had been progress from 1994 to 2009 increasing from 5.2% to 22.3% just to see it halt in 2014 when the number of female MPs dropped to 16.7 % (Kayuni, 2017). Malawian women had gone back to trailing their male counterparts in engaging in political activities (Kayuni, 2017). In its report, OXFAM (2018) reported progress on gender equality in education but little improvement on gender inequality in public services and suggests that Malawi should critically look at its social norms to address the issues that “are still undermining the progressive gender equality and women’s rights” (p 10).

Nowack (2018) reported how one of the legislations was introduced in Malawi to strengthen the support of gender equality through the criminalization of polygamy as well as child marriages. This was opposed in parliament for several years before finally passing into law, and that was not until the section criminalizing polygamy was removed (Nowack, 2018). Even to date, this legislation still meets opposition in the local communities. The behaviour and attitudes of the Malawian parliament exhibit opposition towards gender equality as the local culture takes preference over

the laws being passed. This supports Oppong's (2013) statement that "...the African will always be influenced by his/her cultural values" (p. 2).

This problem in Malawi has persisted since 1997 and in 2006, the then Minister of gender, children, and welfare services in her advocacy against inequality explained to the United Nations that, "Malawi faced a persistence of stereotypical attitudes, negative cultural norms, beliefs and practices undermining women's advancement" (Klaveren, Tijdens, Hughie-Williams, Martin, 2009, p11).

This explanation confirms the 2011 Hofstede study of cultural dimensions where he stated that culture is one of the key effectors of gender inequality in society. In 2015, United Nations Development Fund (UNFPA) also echoed the same idea stating that for many years, some cultural practices have put many women in a disadvantaged position (UNFPA, 2015). This changed in the 2019 elections where more women won the elections seats showing an increase again (Andsen, 2019).

In 2019, during research class, interviews were conducted in Mzuzu. In one of the big national shops, there are 7 branch managers posts which were occupied by men. Eligible female assistants are bypassed during promotions, promoting a man who was not even eligible having not been an assistant branch of that particular branch (Mzumara, 2019). At Mzuzu ECO bank which all the 10 workers are male except for a female messenger, one of the tellers clearly stated that it is easy for a male employee to be transferred to a new location when promotion takes place or from one post to another than it is for a female employee (Mzumara, 2019). According to his explanation, a woman will need the consent of the husband. He said this is in contrast to that of the husband who does not necessarily need any consent from the wife. Therefore, most female employees turn down the promotion offers and

a chance of career progress once they do not get the consent required. This hinders their career progress and growth (Mzumara, 2019).

There has been inconsistency in the progress to gender equality even from the significant country's law- and decision-making body, the parliament. There is persistence of gender inequality that continues to rage on in this world and Malawi inclusive. Azuh and Amodu (2017) suggested in their study that it is better to look at factors which are causing this persistence of gender inequality and how it can be rectified (Azuh & Amodu, 2017). The inquiry on the persistence of gender inequality remains an important one because the "persistence of gender discrimination" contradicts the "anti-discrimination rules promoted in the modern societies" (Verniers, 2018, p. 2). The assumption is that there should be gender equality and effective methods of overcoming the barriers that cause the persistence of gender inequality and gender disparity. Gender equality should be context tailored, not turning female characteristics into male characteristics or vice versa.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the persistence of gender inequality among employees and its impact on gender disparity at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu, Malawi.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research design, the data collection instrument that was used and how it was used for data collection, the population and the procedure used to identify the sample that was used in the study that would be inferred to the population of the employees in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City are discussed. Further, how data was collected, cleaned, and analyzed to draw conclusions from the findings is also discussed. This section also informs how ethical considerations were taken into account for the study in conformity with research standards.

Research Design

Cross-sectional quantitative study, following a positivist paradigm was used to carry out this research. This means the study of a population at a given time of its social problem which can be generalized to the rest of the population (Hemed, 2015; Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg, Leone, 2018). It was used to explore the relationship between employees' perspectives towards gender equality and mediating variable gender disparity; and employees' perspective towards gender equality and mediating variable work performance at the workplace in Mzuzu City. Furthermore, it explored the effect of culture, age and gender on employees' perspectives towards gender equality and how it correlates with gender disparity and work performance at the workplace in Mzuzu City. It was also used to find out the moderating effect of Education and gender inequality between culture and employees' perspectives

towards gender equality at the workplace. This design was selected because it was effective with less time wasted since it used a questionnaire with multiple questions, ensured objectivity in the study and controlled bias in considering the detachment of the researcher from the respondents as the researcher was not in direct contact with the respondents during data collection (Daniel, 2016) and the interpretation of the results (Goertzen, 2017) as it used SPSS and computer for analysis. Taking into consideration time constraints, it was convenient, easier and quicker to conduct. It also enabled the investigation of multiple variables at one time and allowed for multiple outcomes at the same time (Goertzen, 2017). Because of its objectivity and a large sample of the quantitative research method, it allows for generalizability and inference of the findings to other populations in similar settings. This type of study can also be replicated anytime on the same population using a different sample (Slater & Gleason, 2012; Goertzen, 2017).

Quantitative research design examines attitudes, trends and what is known by discovering the cause for the behaviour, trend or the state of affairs. However, “it does not provide insight into why people think, feel, or act in certain ways” (Goertzen, 2017, par 6) therefore does not tell how people behave the way they do. This is why the numerical data in the quantitative research method can be easily understood and communicated to the intended audience with simple explanations (Goertzen, 2017).

This study’s intention to use the medium and large enterprises rather than the small businesses informal sectors was because some research reported that in most countries, women are more likely to work in the informal sector and low-performance activities than men (World Bank, 2012, p79). This means that in informal sectors and low-performance business activities, gender inequality for women was not an issue for this study.

Population and Sampling Procedure

A population (N) is a group of people that have the characteristics of the study and from which a sample (n) for the research will be selected. In this study, the target population was that of Mzuzu City in Malawi. Mzuzu City has been selected for the study as there is a growing number of medium and large businesses which have increased demand for labour force in the city.

Table 3. Mzuzu City Population Statistics by 2018 and 2022

Mzuzu City Population		Labour force	Companies
221,272		85,098	262
Male	Female		
108,848	112,424		

Source: National Statistical Office (2019) and Malawi YP, 2022

Table 3 shows the Mzuzu population which by the 2018 census report was 221,272 consisting of 108,848 male and 112,424 females (National Statistical Office, 2019). In the same report Mzuzu Labour force was reported to be 85,098 (National Statistical Office, 2019). Therefore, the population of this study was 85,089 employees of the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi. Another source (Malawi YP, 2022) reported that there are 262 companies in Mzuzu which was the population of the companies in this study. It is from the populations of this city where the samples for this study were calculated from.

There are several ways of coming up with a sample size such as calculating using formulas or sample size calculators, using the previous study samples and also use of tables generated by other researchers (Singh & Masuku, 2014; Israel, 1992). A combination of these methods has been used to obtain samples for this study. Table 4 was generated by a 2016 Helvetic Editions LTD on population sample size.

Table 4. Sample Size Based on Desired Accuracy

Source: Gill et al., 2010.

Population Size	Variance of the population P=50%					
	Confidence level=95% Margin of error			Confidence level=99% Margin of error		
	5	3	1	5	3	1
50	44	48	50	46	49	50
75	63	70	74	67	72	75
100	79	91	99	87	95	99
150	108	132	148	122	139	149
200	132	168	196	154	180	198
250	151	203	244	181	220	246
300	168	234	291	206	258	295
400	196	291	384	249	328	391
500	217	340	475	285	393	485
600	234	384	565	314	452	579
700	248	423	652	340	507	672
800	260	457	738	362	557	763
1000	278	516	906	398	647	943
1500	306	624	1297	459	825	1375
2000	322	696	1655	497	957	1784
3000	341	787	2286	541	1138	2539
5000	357	879	3288	583	1342	3838
10000	370	964	4899	620	1550	6228
25000	378	1023	6939	643	1709	9944
50000	381	1045	8057	652	1770	12413
100000	383	1056	8762	656	1802	14172
250000	384	1063	9249	659	1821	15489
500000	384	1065	9423	660	1828	15984
1000000	384	1066	9513	660	1831	16244

Table 4 provided sample sizes “that would be necessary for given combinations of precision, confidence levels, and a population percentage or variability of 50% (the figure which many researchers suggest to maximize variance)” (Taherdoost, 2016 a). Table 4 was used to show the samples of a population taking into considering the population and the 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level. The population of this study which was 85,098 employees, if using the Table 4, the sample size would be that which is provided for between population size of 50,000 and 100000 where 50,000 is 381 and 100000 is 383 (Taherdoost, 2016 a). Therefore, 383 was the sample size in accordance to the table for the 85,098 employees.

Further to Table 4, the sample size was also calculated using the sample size calculators of the IbP strategy and research, Indikit calculator, and calculator.net which used the population and the margin of error 5% and confidence level of 95%. The significance of the right size of the sample assisted to reduce the sampling errors and allowed for inferences to be made about the population (Hall, 2018). The population of employees in Mzuzu is 85,098 which gave the sample size of 382 employees according to the sample size calculators who participated in responding to the questionnaire.

The following calculators were used to generate sample size where a confidence level of 95% and a margin error of 5%.

Sample Size Calculators

Confidence Level: ☒ 95%

Margin of Error:

Population:

382

a. Indikit Calculator

Source: <https://www.indikit.net/methodology-calculator>

b. Calculator.net

Confidence Level: 95

Margin of Error:

Population Proportion: Use 50% if not sure

Population Size: Leave blank if unlimited population size.

Sample size: 382

Source: <https://www.calculator.net/sample-size->

c. IbP Strategy and Research calculator

Population size
85098
Margin of Error (%)*
5
Confidence Level
✓ 95%
99%
Sample Size Needed
382

Source: <https://ibp.eu.com/sample-size-calculators/>

Table 5 displays a summary of the results from the calculators above.

Table 5. Sample Size of The Study of Employees in Mzuzu City

Calculator	Mzuzu Population (N)	Employees Population Size (N)	Confiden ce level 95%	Margin of Error 5%	Sample Employee s (n)
2016 Helvetic Editions LTD	221,272	50,000- 100,000	95	5	383
Indikit	221,272	85,098	95	5	382
IbP Strategy and Research	221,272	85,098	95	5	382
Calculator.net	221,272	85,098	95	5	382

The results of the calculators displayed in Table 5 meant that 382 was the sample of employees needed to have adequate statistical power with a confidence level of 95% and a margin error of $\pm 5\%$.

However, the higher sample was taken as it was within the required sample according to the population of the labour force in Mzuzu City. Therefore, the questionnaires were administered to the stratified random samples of 383 respondents comprising of both male and females found in different departments of the medium and large enterprises randomly selected in Mzuzu City of Malawi. According to a Tanzanian study by Lwesyya (2021) medium companies are 50 to 99 employees and large companies are 100 and above employees (Lwesyya, 2021). According to the MSME Policy of 2019 in Malawi micro businesses have (1 to 4 employees), small businesses (5 to 20 employees) and medium businesses (21 to 99 employees) (FinScope Malawi, 2019). Another Malawian study reported that in Malawi a medium enterprise employs people between 21 to 99 employees (FinScope Malawi, 2019), which suggested that any enterprise with 100 and above is a large enterprise. With the reviewed literature, it was concluded that the size of companies depended on the context. Therefore, the selection of medium and large sized companies considered those with 21 or more employees (Lwesyya, 2021; FinScope Malawi, 2019).

With regard to the enterprises, the sample size of the companies was arrived at by using the 10% calculation of the size of the companies' population. The precision which is the difference between the estimated and the true population (Sanjerehei & Rundel, 2019) was considered using an online calculator by EPITOOLS (2022). Using the online calculator, the sample size was 19 for a 0.05 margin of error. The calculation was derived at after entering the confidence interval of 0.1 (10%) and entering a precision of +/- 0.05 (5%) which is the acceptable or allowable error (EPITOOLS, 2022) using the population of 262 companies. Table 6 presents the input into the online EPITOOLS calculator

Table 6. Inputs for Companies' Sample

Estimated Proportion	0.05
Desired precision of estimate	0.1
Confidence level	0.95
Population size	265

The inputs into the calculator were as shown in Table 6 where a precision of .1 which is 10% was used with a 95% confidence level. The results from the online calculator are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Results for Companies' Sample

Large population	19
Population = 265	18

The results for the specified input in Table 7 were 18 which is the required sample size for the specified inputs for the population of 265 companies in Mzuzu City. These results confirm the Epitools results already calculated as reflected in

Table 8. Sample Sizes for Varying Prevalence and Precision Values

	AP = 0.01	AP = 0.02	AP = 0.05	AP = 0.1	AP = 0.2	AP = 0.5
Precision = 0.01	381	753	1825	3458	6147	9604
Precision = 0.02	96	189	457	865	1537	2401
Precision = 0.05	16	31	73	139	246	385
Precision = 0.1	4	8	19	35	62	97
Precision = 0.2	1	2	5	9	16	25

Source: <https://epitools.ausvet.com.au/oneproportion>

Table 8 displays the already existing results for the prevalence and precision values of different sample sizes with their prevalence and precision values. For the companies, a precision value of .1 which is 10% with a confidence level of 95% is 19.

Secondly, 10% was also considered for the companies which Bullen (2022) stated in her report that “a good maximum sample size is about 10% of the

population” (Bullen, 2022 par 6). Using Bullen’s report, 10% of 262 companies listed in Mzuzu is 26. Therefore, it is in the 26 companies that the study was carried out. Out of the population of 262 companies 10% randomly selected medium and large companies were studied using the questionnaire for the research. Due to the size of the city and number of the companies, 26 organizations were a good representation of the population of employees of medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

Sample for the Study

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative part of the population to determine the characteristics of the whole population” (Patel, 2021). There are two types of sampling techniques: probability sampling technique and non-probability sampling technique. Both sampling technique were used, Probability sampling for the organisations which was the simple random sampling where every case of the population has an equal chance of being selected into a sample (Taherdoost, H., (2016) a). The selection of the 26 enterprises for the human resource questionnaire administration was randomly selected. Non-probability sampling technique was used for the 283 employees in the 26 enterprises. This does not depend on chance but reaching to those who are available and are ready to participate in the research at that particular time (Taherdoost, H., (2016) a).

Under the probability sampling technique, stratified sampling was used to administer the questionnaire. Then the non-probability sampling technique which is the convenience sampling was used to administer the questionnaire. Therefore, this was a combination of two techniques, probability and non-probability sampling techniques, which were stratified sampling and convenience sampling. Therefore, the sample consisted of stratified conveniently selected employees of the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

The selection of the sample for the study was done in collaboration with the human resource departments of the randomly selected 26 enterprises. This study utilized stratified convenience sampling where to the available participants, all are invited to participate in the study as part of the 383 employees' sample (Taherdoost, H., 2016 a). It consisted of employees from the randomly selected enterprises according to their natural setting. The number of samples per enterprise depended on the number of employees in the enterprise. In the stratified convenience sampling, a population of employees in large and medium enterprises were identified and divided into subgroups in accordance to gender, age and departments where they were conveniently selected in strata to arrive at the research study sample of 383 employees. Stratified sampling ensured that every subgroup: gender, age and department in the enterprise were included in the sample. Stratified sampling also reduced the chance of bias and increased the accuracy of the results (Patel, 2021) as it ensured that each stratum participated in the study. The data of the sample selected from the entire set of employees of the medium and large enterprises was used to make inferences on the whole population of the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City, Malawi. However due to its convenience sampling, it limits the generalization of the study.

Firstly, permission was obtained from the human resource managers who made reference to the executive managers for the questionnaires to be distributed and responded to. After permission was granted, the human resource manager was the key person in the selection of the sample to participate in the responding to the questionnaire in the companies. Therefore, it was important that the sampling of the participants was done together with the human resource manager of the company.

The employees were selected according to departments, education and gender in the enterprise by the human resource manager or the executive manager. These participated in responding to the questionnaire in their natural setting. The departments were the executives, managerial positions, middle executives and support staff. Education consisted of PhD, Masters, Degree and MSCE/Primary school level and for gender it was Male or Female. Stratified sampling was used as there was a great deal of variation within a population of employees in Mzuzu hence the population was divided into subgroups according to their similarities in the characteristics of each stratum or subgroup. This was because the study consisted of different enterprises in Mzuzu City where the population of each company was not the same under the normal circumstances. The stratified convenience sampling was used in this study because it took into account the variations in employees' population in each organization, age, gender and department distribution in the enterprises, and to ensure that every stratum was adequately represented among the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City (Taherdoost, H., (2016) a).

The next step was to distribute the questionnaire to those available at that time to participate in the research hence the human resource manager distributed the questionnaire to those willing to participate in the study in each stratum. This means that some accepted and others declined to participate which made the human resource manager to give to another employee willing to participate in the research by responding to the questionnaire. The sampling technique used means that every employee was not represented in the organisations limiting the generalization of this study.

Instruments for Data Collection

The data collection was conducted using a self-developed structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of Likert type responses with five option answers.

The questionnaire were used to determine the relationship between perceptions towards gender equality and gender disparity at the workplace, the effect of culture, age and gender on perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in large to medium organizations in Mzuzu City, Malawi. The questionnaire examined areas of job satisfaction levels that motivate work performance in employees through level of pay, benefits, performance appraisal rewards, promotion, supervisory support, organizational policies and procedures and communication effectiveness and interpersonal relations with fellow employees. It would therefore examine the relationship between work performance and perspective towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu city, Malawi.

The questionnaire contained demographics which provided the information on the sample in the study. It also contained questions which responded to the research questions on culture, gender inequality, work performance, gender disparity and perspectives towards gender equality at the workplace. As indicated earlier on, the questionnaire was piloted to test for validity to obtain the desired data to be collected from the sample.

Reliability

Reliability means the accuracy of the instrument which measures the extent to which a research instrument consistently has the same results if used in the same situation (Hall, 2018; Taherdoost, 2016 b; Heale & Twycross, 2015). The questionnaire was self-developed and was piloted and checked by the experts in the

area. The results of the pilot study were analyzed and has been reported showing the internal consistency of the data collection instrument representing that questions in the questionnaire were reliable.

The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient indicated that the questionnaire had an acceptable internal consistency according to the levels of the Cronbach alpha as displayed in Table 9 by Habidin, 2015.

Table 9. Cronbach's Alpha's Rule of Thumb

Cronbach's Alpha	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Source: (Habidin et all, (2015)

Table 9 displays the reliability coefficient alpha (the measurement of internal consistency) was placed at .70 and there was verification of the internal consistency and reliability by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability whose rate must be .70 or more for its reliability consideration as on the Table 9 (Taber, 2018; Taherdoost, 2016; Habidin et all, 2015). Therefore, the questionnaire was piloted tested for reliability in accordance with the context of the research. The questionnaire which consisted of 40 Likert-type responses of scale 1 – 5 was piloted to medium and large enterprises using 15 participants (5 from a large enterprise and 10 from a Medium enterprise). The reliability coefficient from the pilot study is a Cronbach alpha (α) of .75.

Validity

Validity means the extent to which the measurement of a concept is accurate, truly representing the data and concept of the study making the research instrument dependable (Hall, 2018; Heale & Twycross, 2015). In quantitative research, validity is one of the most essential demonstrations of the research method and the numbers should truly reflect what the user intended to measure and draw valid and reliable conclusions from the research (Taherdoost, 2016 b); Habidin et al, 2015). Therefore, to increase the validity of the questions in the self-developed questionnaire, consultations with experts in the area of the study and research methodology experts were made (Fernández-Gómez et al, 2020). There are three types of experts: the tactical experts and these are knowledgeable on the subject matter. There are the conciliatory experts who are objective and use common sense. And thirdly, there are communicative experts who are mostly involved in the study. The study used all the three experts for the consultation on the instrument for the research. Tactical and communicative experts (Fernández-Gómez et al 2020) were used to ensure quality that the instrument produce the correct and reliable results for the study. This made the instrument to be reliable.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to the stratified random sample of 383 respondents from different levels of departments and different ages in the 26 medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu, Malawi. Upon arrival at the enterprise, an introduction letter of the researcher was introduced to the enterprise executive administrator to allow for permission of the participation of their enterprise in the study. Then when the permission was granted, the selection of respondents was carried out. The respondents were selected together with the human resource manager

who had a list of the employees of the enterprise. The list was not disclosed citing precedencies of the past of leaked human resource information regarding personnel. However, the respondents were stratified into similar groups of departments, age and gender, then the participants were selected from the strata together with the human resource department who had good knowledge of their organization. The strata were selected first according to departments to ensure that all departments participate in the research taking into consideration job positions, age and gender.

Then a meeting was held with the selected respondents to explain to them the nature of the questions. The respondents were told the length of the questionnaire and that they were free to leave the exercise and withdraw their consent at any time (University of Michigan, 2021 and UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (undated). Consent was progressive throughout the research process (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al, 2018). To participate in the research was by choice and a participant was at liberty to pull out at any time during the research. They were told that they were not to be pressured and coerced to assist in carrying out the research.

The human resource manager then distributed the questionnaire to those willing to participate in the study in the different strata. This method ensured that all employees had equal chance of participation in the research and no employee was forced to participate. Only those willing took part responding to the questions in the questionnaire. All the respondents were aged above 18 years old and employed in the selected organizations. All respondents were Malawian employees based in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Method of Data Analysis

After the data collection, data was entered into the Predictive Analytics Software (PASW) which is a statistical software that was used to organize and analyze numerical data and further interpreted and presented so as to be apply it to solve a social problem (Rahman & Muktadir, 2021). Data was cleaned using the PASW which was further used test the assumptions for multiple regression. PASW was also used for reliability tests which were also carried out to determine the suitability of the processes to the data before analyses were run.

PASW has been selected because it is easy to use with a large amount of numerical data with multiple variables for analysis to explore relationships that lead to prediction of social problems (Rahman & Muktadir, 2021).

Then PASW was used for Pearson's Correlation to find Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) between the variables and the strength of their association and if it was statistically significance. The value of r close to 1 or -1 indicate a strong linear relationship and if the r is close to 0 indicates a weak linear relationship (Rao, 2020). Pearson's Correlation was also used to measure the linear relationship of the quantitative variables (Kumar, 2023 & Turney, 2022) of this study. The choice of Pearson correlation coefficient was also because it is an inferential statistic and can be used to test statistical hypotheses and generalize it. Coefficient of determination (r^2) was used to identify the strength of the model fit. In this research Pearson correlation was used to measure if there is a linear relationship and the strength of the relationships between the independent, moderating, mediating variables with the dependent variable (Rao, 2020). All Pearson correlation coefficient that had a p -value $\leq .05$ was considered statistically significant allowing for the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Then PASW was also used to conduct multiple regression analysis on the cleaned data collected to determine if there was statistically significant effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. According to a research study, regression analysis is significant because it provides a measure of coefficients of determination that explains the effect of the explanatory variables, independent variables on the explained variable, the dependent variable (Ajibade, Ademola & Dare, 2021). Another study also stated that regression helps in understanding the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and how the independent variable influences the dependent variable (Kuhn, 2023, Hommel & Blettner, 2010). In the study by Schneider, Hommel and Blettner (2010) described “Regression analysis as a model that describes the relationships between the dependent variables and the independent variables in a simplified mathematical Form” (Hommel & Blettner, 2010) p1. In this research therefore, multiple regression was run to determine the variance in the employees’ perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace that could be attributed to the selected independent variables. It was also used to determine the influence of the independent variables, moderating variables, mediating variables with the dependent variable. It was also used to find out if there was a relationship between employees’ perceptions towards gender equality and gender disparity; and to find out whether there is a relationship between perspectives towards gender equality and employees’ performance and the strength of the relationships. Where the influence or the relationships between the variables were statistically significant ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$) then the null was rejected.

The analysis was carried in the following manner:

Research question one used PASW to explore the relationship between gender disparity and employees’ perspectives towards gender equality in medium and large

enterprises in Mzuzu City. To explore if there is a statistically significant relationship between gender disparity and employees' perspectives towards gender equality and the strength of their association, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used.

Research question two further used PASW to explore the relationship between work performance and employees' perspectives towards gender equality in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City. To determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between work performance and employees' perspectives towards gender equality at the workplace and the strength of their associations Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used.

Research question three was analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine if there is a statistically significant effect of culture on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and the strength of that relationship between the variable culture and perceptions towards gender equality. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used to determine the association and the strength of that association between culture and employees' perspectives towards gender equality.

Research question four aims to explore the extent to which age affects employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Hence, Multiple regression analysis was used to determine if there a statistically significant effect of age on employees' perceptions towards gender equality and the strength of that relationship. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used to examine the relationship and the strength of the relationship between the variables age and perceptions towards gender equality.

Research question five was analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine if there a statistically significant gender impact on employees' perceptions towards gender equality and the strength of the relationship between the variables gender and perceptions towards gender equality. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and coefficient of determination (r^2) were used to examine the relationship and the strength of the relationship between the variables gender and perceptions towards gender equality.

The results of these analyses have been reported and interpreted. Even though this quantitative research method can be able to establish the relationships and correlations among the variables, it does not establish the causative relationship between the variables. Therefore, the study should open for more investigations to establish the causation. Tables have been generated based on the data collected and analysis of the relationships between the variables.

Ethical Considerations

The research aimed to enhance knowledge and not cause harm to the participants, the enterprises, and the population at large. Therefore, the research must conform to the international ethical standards during the research (University of Michigan, 2021). Since the one ultimately responsible for the welfare of the participants is the researcher. The ethical conduct of the researcher and all the participants protected the participants themselves and the social rights and welfare of all those who may be negatively affected by the study (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research; Johnson, 2012).

A letter of introduction to the enterprises was obtained from Adventist University of Africa Institution Ethics Review Committee to allow for the obtaining of permission to carry out the study in the medium to large enterprises in Mzuzu,

Malawi on perceptions of gender inequality at the workplace. A letter of introduction was presented and a consent form to the target enterprises of the study for permission to conduct research.

Once the permission was granted, firstly, it was to work with the human resource department to conduct a stratified random sampling where each employee of the population had a chance to be selected to participate in the survey. The research participants were selected fairly and equitably, and without exercising personal bias or preference (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research; Johnson, 2012). This was to ensure that there was no discrimination of any sort as each group such as gender, age group and departments had a chance to participate in the survey.

To ensure safe management of the collected data, data was only used for the intended and stated purpose of this research. The identities of the participants were completely anonymous by redacting the names of the companies and use non-identifiable description at the same time, the participants were anonymous as they were not be required to fill out their names on the questionnaire. The data was stored in a password protected drive and computer and all storage folders were encrypted. Access to data was controlled to make sure that a minimum number of essential people had access to it. Any data that was not needed in the research was deleted.

The respondents were informed of the value of participating in the study, but they were also informed that participation was based on their choice and decision. Participating in the study was voluntary and no respondent was forced to do so. A consent form was attached to the questionnaire which was signed by the participants before completing the questionnaire. At the time that the respondents were filling out the questionnaire, they were again informed that if they did not feel like continuing, they were free to withdraw from the study. The participants were assured of the

confidentiality of their responses and that the survey was anonymously done. There were no names written on the survey by the participants because it was not required for confidentiality. This was expressly written on the survey and was explained to the participants before providing the questionnaire. The fact that the report will be shared with them once it is out was also explained to the participants.

Approval was sought for any material or literature used during the research to avoid plagiarism and copyright. Where reviewed literature was used, the author was acknowledged as in-text citation and in the reference section.

Since the research was using human subjects, ethical clearance on human subjects was sought before conducting the research from the National Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (NHSRC) in Malawi. Efforts were made to ensure that the risks to the research participants were minimized, and potential benefits and knowledge to the participants and society were maximized where the gains outweighed the risks (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research; Johnson, 2012).

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

This chapter presents the analysis, findings and interpretation of the data collected using a quantitative research questionnaire on the persistence of gender inequality from medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

The Study Setting

Mzuzu City is the third city in Malawi. The first and the capital city is Lilongwe City which is found in the central region of Malawi. The second being Blantyre City located in the southern part of Malawi and the third being Mzuzu City located in the Northern part of Malawi.

The city does not have adequate policies and regulations resulting in over 60% of the population living in unplanned settlements requiring expanded service delivery, proper urban planning and good financial management (Mpoola, 2011). Land is the most important resource in Mzuzu which requires equitable access for all its habitants (Mpoola, 2011). Mzuzu City council does not have a local policy on gender therefore; it is guided by the National Gender Policy on gender issues. This has resulted in weak localized strategies towards gender equality (Mpoola, 2011). Despite Malawi's parity in education with girls at 50.3% and boys at 49.7%, small and medium sized businesses in Mzuzu are dominated by men at 61.5% men and 39.5% women (Mpoola, 2011). Mzuzu City has been selected for the study as there is a growing number of medium and large businesses which have increased demand for labour force in the city.

Furthermore, the ongoing urbanization has led to a shift in the traditional workspace. Using the most recent 2018 census report, Mzuzu population was 221,272 consisting of 108,848 male and 112,424 females (National Statistical Office, 2019) and has Labour force of 85,098 (National Statistical Office, 2019). In 2022, there were 262 companies listed in the Malawi YP which is business directory in Malawi (Malawi YP, 2022) where medium and large enterprises are found in accordance with the definition for this study. However, there is little available research on these dynamics in Mzuzu. This study was aimed at bridging the gap of this knowledge by contributing to the meagre already existing knowledge on perspectives of gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Response Rate

As stated, the study involved distribution of questionnaire to 26 medium and large enterprises which were randomly selected. Two types of questionnaires were distributed in the enterprises. These were questionnaire for the human resource manager on the population of the companies and the distribution of roles in the enterprises, and the survey for the employees to respond to. The response rate is in two phases.

Firstly, a questionnaire for the human resource requesting the number of employees in an enterprise and its distribution in the management positions was distributed to the human resource department. Out of the 26 enterprises targeted, 10 enterprises were willing to provide the responses to the human resource questionnaire regarding the total number of employees in their company and the distribution of duties in management positions or leadership positions. Other enterprises expressed unwillingness as they considered such information sensitive to be provided to an external individual according to their internal policies. The data collected are

displayed in Table 10, this shows a response rate of 38% of the sample for the enterprises. The low-rate response can be attributed to the strictness of the enterprises to release the statistics regarding the employees.

Table 10. Distribution of Employees Population in 10 Enterprises in Mzuzu City

Enterprise	Total no of Employees	M	F	Board of Directors	M	F	Executives	M	F	Senior manager	M	F
1	32	24	8	11	1	0	5	4	1	12	9	3
2	33		6	5	5	0	6	5	1	5	3	2
3	38	14	24	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	3	1
4	53	44	9	1	1	0	1	1	0	3	2	1
5	55	25	30	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
6	59	53	6	18	13	5	9	7	2	9	7	2
7	68	47	21	10	7	3	4	3	1	7	4	3
8	100	52	48	1	1	0	6	6	0	8	4	4
9	314	194	120	3	3	0	6	5	1	20	11	9
10	997	441	556	1	1	0	1	1	0	17	14	3
Total	1749	921	828	42	34	8	40	34	6	86	58	28

Source: Researcher's own data

Table 10 is the statistics on the available information on employees and distribution of labour force at the workplace in 10 organizations. Table 10 shows the unequal distribution of labour force among employees and the gap increases as the job positions go higher. These results were consistent in its revelation of the persistence of gender inequality (Mpoola, 2011) at the workplace in Mzuzu city especially in the top positions. In the report by Mpoola (2011), it was stated that “Small and medium sized economic activities are dominated by men at 61.5 percent as compared to women at 39.5 percent” (p. 9). From Table 10, Figure 3 is generated which shows the general division of labour in an organization in Mzuzu City.

From the 10 enterprises which provided the information had a total of 1749 employees. Figure 3 shows that out of 1749 employees 828 (47%) were female and

921(53%) were male. At face value, the employees' distribution seems to be balanced with almost 50/50.

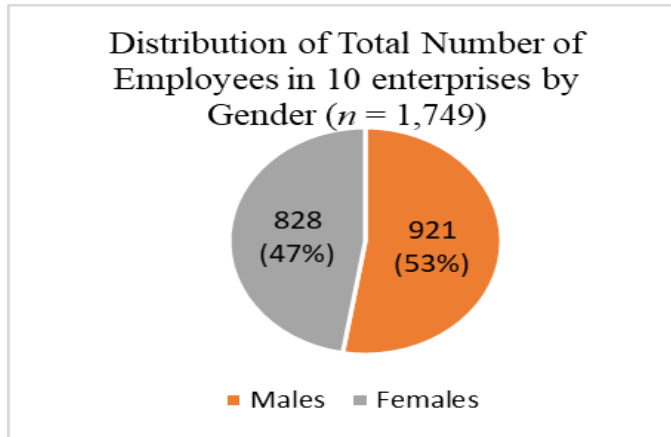


Figure 3. Distribution of the Total Number of Employees in 10 Enterprises by Gender

Figure 4 was also generated from Table 10 showing the distribution of labour force in leadership positions in the selected organization in Mzuzu City.

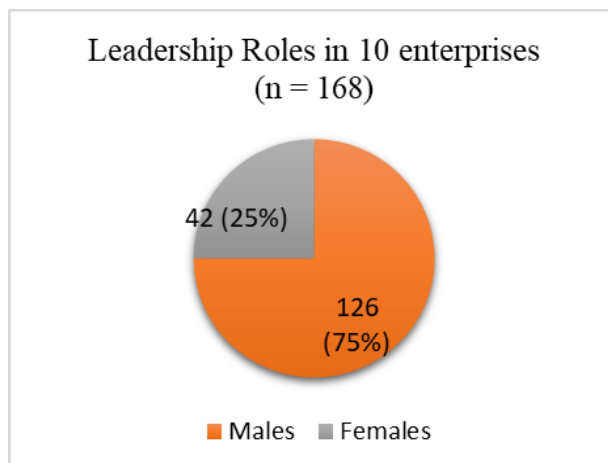


Figure 4. Leadership Roles in 10 Enterprises by Gender

Figure 4 shows that when the distribution of leadership roles is taken into account, inequality still persists which is at 25% female and 75% male and increases at top positions which in this study's consideration are executives and board of

directors. This has been observed from the 10 enterprises which were able to provide their statistics with regards to number of employees.

The trend of leadership roles can be observed in Figure 5 which is an image of gender inequality in Mzuzu City medium and large enterprises.

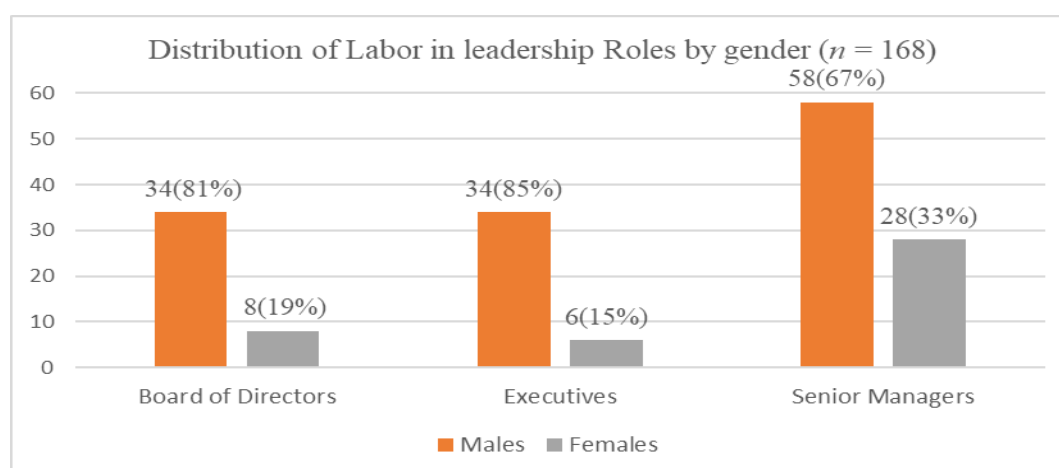


Figure 5. Distribution of Labor in leadership Roles by Gender

Figure 5 shows the different positions and how the distribution of labour changes as positions goes higher in an organization. From the data collected, it shows that in the position of senior managers, there are 28 (33%) female and 58(67%) males. Among the executives 6 (15%) female and 34 (85%) males and the board of directors has 8 (19%) female and 34(81%) male workers. This shows that the gender inequality at the workplace in Mzuzu City continues to persist as positions go higher in the companies ending with women being under represented in the decision-making bodies such as the board. These findings agree with early reports (Wirth, 2004) that positions leading to executive positions are mostly assigned to male employees which was affirmed in later studies (Vernier, 2018; OXFAM International, 2018) where they also reported that gender inequalities are more obvious on management levels.

Secondly, the research questionnaire for the respondents was distributed to the sample of 383 employees. There were 383 employees that responded to the questionnaire and out of 383 respondents in the study, 194 (51%) were male and 189 (48%) were female. Their positive response to the questionnaire was due to the fact that it was a physical questionnaire which was easy to respond to as it required just circling the answers which best described their perspectives and opinions with a pencil or a pen. Everyone was able to do it and those who were not able to read as fast or lazy to read, the questionnaire was read to them to facilitate the quick response.

Validity of the Data

After the collection of the data, it was entered into SPSS. Then using SPSS data was cleaned and analyzed for any double entries so as to make it ready for analysis and providing the results without any unwanted factors leading to wrong results. The responses were also run through SPSS to obtain Cronbach alpha and it was at .751 which means that the questionnaire was a valid tool for data collection and was reliable. This was done with the purpose of obtaining valid results.

Principal Component Factor Analysis

Using PASW, the principal component factor analysis was conducted to reduce the data points. The data points reduced from 40 items to 12 principal components that had Eigenvalue greater than one as presented in Table 11. This was to help group the items into components where similar items loaded to form a component. The principal components which had eigenvalue of greater than 1 were retained.

Table 11. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.14	12.85	12.85	3.67	9.17	9.17
2	3.66	9.15	22.00	2.88	7.21	16.38
3	3.00	7.51	29.51	2.88	7.19	23.56
4	2.04	5.10	34.61	2.85	7.12	30.68
5	1.83	4.57	39.18	1.89	4.72	35.40
6	1.75	4.38	43.56	1.81	4.52	39.92
7	1.54	3.86	47.41	1.64	4.10	44.02
8	1.41	3.54	50.95	1.61	4.02	48.05
9	1.33	3.33	54.28	1.57	3.93	51.98
10	1.27	3.17	57.45	1.52	3.79	55.77
11	1.12	2.81	60.25	1.48	3.70	59.48
12	1.07	2.67	62.92	1.38	3.45	62.92
13	.96	2.39	65.31			
14	.92	2.30	67.61			
15	.87	2.17	69.79			
16	.81	2.03	71.82			
17	.81	2.02	73.83			
18	.76	1.89	75.73			
19	.74	1.84	77.56			
20	.68	1.69	79.26			
21	.65	1.63	80.89			
22	.64	1.61	82.50			
23	.63	1.56	84.06			
24	.57	1.43	85.49			
25	.54	1.36	86.85			
26	.52	1.29	88.14			
27	.49	1.22	89.36			
28	.48	1.20	90.56			
29	.45	1.13	91.69			
30	.41	1.02	92.71			
31	.38	.94	93.65			
32	.36	.91	94.56			
33	.34	.85	95.41			
34	.32	.79	96.21			
35	.31	.78	96.99			
36	.28	.71	97.69			
37	.28	.70	98.40			
38	.24	.61	99.00			
39	.21	.54	99.54			
40	.18	.46	100.00			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The first component was having an eigenvalue of 5.14 explaining 9.17% of the variance in employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. The second component has an eigenvalue of 3.66 explaining 7.21% of the variance towards employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. The total

variance explained by the 12 principal components on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace is 63%.

In the rotated matrix, the first 5 items load heavily under component 1 with a regression coefficient ranging from .76 to .45 with Cronbach's alpha (α)=.77, the second 4 items loading heavily under component 2 with a regression coefficient ranging from .79 to .56 with (α)=.71, the third 6 items loading heavily under component 3 with a regression coefficient ranging from .71 to .47 with (α)=.70, the fourth 5 items loading heavily under component 4 with a regression coefficient ranging from .77 to .56 with (α)=.74, fifth 4 items ranging from .69 to .41 with (α)=.43, sixth 2 items ranging from .80 to .57 with (α)=.39, seventh 3 items from .73 to .42 with (α)=.51, eighth 3 items .62 to .52 with (α)=.31, ninth 2 items from .81 to .48 with (α)=.23, tenth 2 items with .68 each with (α)=.29, eleventh item with .79 and twelfth 2 items with .74 to .55 with (α)=.28.

For the purposes of this research the variables were computed using the following five components shown in Table 12. Table 12 presents the variables computed from the principal factor analysis.

Table 12. Variable Components

Items used	Factor questions	Cronbach Alpha	Computed Variable
Component 1 which consisted of 6 items:	1. A woman or a man on the same position should receive the same salary or pay, 2. I think that gender equality is very important in our organization, 3. I feel that workplace benefits should be the same for both male and female employees, 4. I feel that both a man and a woman can be a good boss or leader for this organization so long they have the same education, 5. As a parent, I am willing to work hard for the organization, 6. I like doing the things I do at the moment and it is fulfilling,	(Cronbach alpha .77);	employees' perceptions towards gender equality

Table continues

Table 12 (continues). Variable Components

Component 2 consisted of 4 items:	1. I am satisfied with my chances for promotion and I am willing to work hard for it, 2. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition I deserve makes me willing to do more, 3. I feel a sense of pride and enjoyment in doing my job, 4. I am satisfied with the opportunities for promotion in my job	(Cronbach alpha =.71);	Work performance
Component 3 consisted of 6 items:	1. I believe men make better political leaders than women do, 2. Men make better business executives than women do, 3. Do you think your organization should have a male employee as the CEO or manager, 4. I think a university education is better for boy than for a girl. 5. When jobs are scarce, men should be given priority to a job than women. 6. I believe that if a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems.	(Cronbach alpha = .70);	Culture
Component 4 consisted of 5 items:	1. I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive in my organization. 2. I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me. 3. There is really little chance for my promotion in the organization. 4. I don't feel my efforts at work are rewarded the way they should be. 5. There are benefits I do not have which I should have.	(Cronbach alpha = .74)	Gender disparity
Component 7 consisted of 3 items:	1. Are female employees willing to take up jobs believed to be for men despite the low salary pay? 2. It is unfair that women are given priority in promotion opportunities in the organization 3. Can a female employee make a good CEO or manager for your organization!?	(Cronbach alpha = .51).	Gender inequality

Component 1 which consisted of 6 items: a woman or a man on the same position should receive the same salary or pay, I think that gender equality is very important in our organization, I feel that workplace benefits should be the same for both male and female employees, I feel that both a man and a woman can be a good boss or leader for this organization so long they have the same education, as a parent, I am willing to work hard for the organization, I like doing the things I do at the moment and it is fulfilling, was computed as employees' perceptions towards gender equality (Cronbach's alpha .77); Component 2 consisted of 4 items: I am satisfied with my chances for promotion and I am willing to work hard for it, when I do a good

job, I receive the recognition I deserve makes me willing to do more, I feel a sense of pride and enjoyment in doing my job, I am satisfied with the opportunities for promotion in my job, was computed as work performance (Cronbach's $\alpha = .71$); Component 3 consisted of 6 items: I believe men make better political leaders than women do, men make better business executives than women do, Do you think your organization should have a male employee as the CEO or manager, I think a university education is better for boy than for a girl, when jobs are scarce, men should be given priority to a job than women, I believe that if a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems, was computed as culture (Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$); Component 4 consisted of 5 items: I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive in my organization, I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me, there is really little chance for my promotion in the organization, I don't feel my efforts at work are rewarded the way they should be and there are benefits I do not have which I should have, was computed as gender disparity (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$) and Component 7 consisted of 3 items: Are female employees willing to take up jobs believed to be for men despite the low salary pay, it is unfair that women are given priority in promotion opportunities in the organization and can a female employee make a good CEO or manager for your organization, was computed as gender inequality (Cronbach's $\alpha = .51$). These variables were categorized 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3- neutral, 4 – agree and 5 – strongly agree.

Reliability

The reliability tests for the questionnaire were done through consultation with the supervisors (Fernández-Gómez et al 2020) and piloting of the questionnaire to an organization which indicated that the instrument was reliable (Teijlingen & Hundley,

2001). After collection of the data, the internal consistency was met at the Cronbach alpha for the research instrument, the questionnaire, was .751 which indicates acceptable internal consistency of the instrument used for the research and that it measured what it was intended to measure.

The principal component factor analysis conducted shows that the five variables had Eigenvalue greater than one. Component 1 Eigenvalue of 5.14, component 2 Eigenvalue of 3.66, component 3 Eigenvalue 3.00, component 4 Eigenvalue of 2.04 and component 7 Eigenvalue of 1.54.

Assumptions

For a multiple regression to be carried out there must be two or more independent variables predicting a dependent variable. There are five main assumptions a multiple regression must satisfy and these are: independence of the independent variables (independence of errors), no multicollinearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity. The assumption tests were carried out to determine the suitability of the processes to the data before analyses were run. The independent variables were more than two as they are three independent variables in this study.

Non-Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity was not present in both of the models as VIF model *Sex (gender)* = 1.12, *Age*=1.02, *level of education* = 1.05, *work performance* = 1.08, *culture* =1.24, *gender disparity* = 1.08, *gender inequality* = 1.18 and which is < 2.5 and is within the allowed limit of multicollinearity for a variable to be included in the analysis (Johnson, Jones, & Manley, 2018). Any other independent variables that correlated strongly would be excluded from the analysis. In this study no variable was

excluded as all variables' VIF were below 2.5, indicating that there was no multicollinearity of significance see *appendix V (a)*.

Normality

For valid inferences of the data to be made from the regression analysis, the residuals should follow a normal distribution. These are the error terms or the differences of the observed value of the independent variable and the dependent variable. Normality is tested using the predicted probability (P-P) plot. Normality assumption was met as the P.P. plot indicated the normal distribution of the residuals as they conformed to the diagonal normality line in the plot see *appendix V (g)*.

Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is when the distribution of the variance of the residuals or the errors in a regression model is constant so that it does not change as the independent variable changes. Therefore, the variance of the dependent variable is the same for all the variables. This facilitates the analysis because the analysis was based on the assumption of equal variance. Therefore, there should be no clear pattern in the distribution, it should not give a cone-shaped pattern, that is when there is homoscedasticity. If there is a cone-shaped pattern then there is heteroscedasticity and data is not fit for regression. In this study, there is homoscedasticity as seen in *appendix V (h)*. Therefore, the assumption in this study is met.

Independence of Errors

One of the assumptions is that residuals are independent of one another. This is an assumption that there is no auto correlation of the residuals that would affect the results of the regression analysis. To test the presence of autocorrelation, Durbin-Watson test was used. Its statistics range from 0-4 with the value of 2 being the best

situation of no autocorrelation at all (zero correlation). Any value below 2 there is positive correlation and any value above 2 there is negative correlation. However, there is an acceptable range of between 1.50 to 2.50 and the data met the assumption of independence errors (*Durbin-Watson value* = 1.89). Therefore, with the Durbin-Watson of 1.89 for the regression analysis of this study, it is within the acceptable range signifying that the model is fit for analysis see *appendix V(i)*.

Linearity

A linear relationship of the variables means that there is a straight-line relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable. For this study, it is the independent variables and the dependent variables. There should be a straight-line relationship either positively or negatively. And once the residuals are normally distributed and there is homoscedasticity in the data, there is linearity. For this study there is Linearity because the residuals are normally distributed and there is homoscedasticity in the data on the scatter plot.

The assumption for regression analysis has been met and therefore the data was ready to be used for the analysis and to some degree the results will be valid (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014).

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

For demographics of the population and their response rate, a frequency analysis was done. This section shows the respondents information based on gender, age, level of education and job titles as in Table 13.

Table 13. Demographic Characteristics of Employees in Mzuzu City

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	194	50.7	50.7	50.7
	Female	189	49.3	49.3	100
	Total	383	100	100	
Age	18-30	143	37.3	37.3	37.3
	31-40	99	25.8	25.8	63.2
	41-50	94	24.5	24.5	87.7
	51-60	42	11.0	11.0	98.7
	61-above	5	1.3	1.3	100
	Total	383	100	100	
Level of Education	Primary	4	1.0	1.0	1.0
	JC/MSCE	149	38.9	39.1	40.2
	Degree	208	54.3	54.6	94.8
	Masters	19	5.0	5.0	99.7
	PhD/Doctorate	1	.3	.3	100
	Total	381	99.5	100	
	Missing	2	.5		
Total		383	100		
Job Title	Exec/Senior Mgt level	11	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Middle Mgt level	55	14.4	14.4	17.3
	Senior Staff	189	49.3	49.5	66.8
	Support Staff level	127	33.2	33.2	100
	Total	382	99.7	100	
	Missing	1	.3		
Total		383	100		

Demographics provide an overview of the participants of the study as this may affect the way they respond to the question in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to the employees of medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu who formed the categories in Table 13.

Gender

Table 13 presents the respondents who were composed of 194 (51%) male and 189 (48%) female. As the demographics have shown, slightly there were slightly more male participants than female. This could be attributed to the fact that some enterprises, had only male employees. Therefore, the absence of one gender increased the gender distribution of respondents in the organization.

Age

The participants in Table 13 were employees in Mzuzu city from medium and large enterprises who were above 18 years of age. Those whose ages ranged between 18-30 years old were 143 (37%), respondents who were between 31-40 years old were 99 (26%), respondents who were between 41-50 years old were 94 (25%), respondents who were between 51-60 years old were 42 (11%), and respondents who were 61 years old and above were 5 (1%). The majority of the participants were between 18 – 30 years old accounting for 37% of the sample.

Education

The education level was of those that were able to read and understand the questions on the questionnaire which meant that they had attended at least primary school level. Out of 383 respondents 149 (39%) had JC/MSCE level, 208 (54%) had degree, 19 (5%) had masters, 1 (.3%) had PhD/Doctorate. It can be seen that Mzuzu city has more people with lower education level of JC/MSCE and there is a high number of first-degree holders.

Job Position

The questionnaire was distributed to the workers at all levels of the enterprises from the executive to the subordinate employees. From the Table 13, the respondents were 11 (3%) executive /Senior management level, 55 (14%) Middle management level, 189 (49%) senior staff and 127 (33%) support staff. This confirms the study that stated that there are more entries into the job at the lower levels which thins out as the positions goes up (Ammerman & Groysberg 2021). This accounts for the large number of employees at the senior staff level.

Results and Discussions Based on Research Questions

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Correlation analysis was responding to Research question 1 and 2, to determine if there was statistically significant relationship between the mediating variables (gender disparity and work performance) with the dependent variable (perceptions towards gender equality). It was further used to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between the three independent variables (culture, age and gender) and the two moderating variables (education and gender inequality) with the dependent variable (perceptions towards gender equality). These correlation analyses in Table 14 were used to show the relationships, the strength of the linear relationships of the variables and their statistical significance.

Table 14. Correlations

		Employees perceptions towards gender equality	Work Performance	Culture	Gender Disparity	Gender Inequality	Gender	Age	Level of Education
Employees perceptions towards gender equality	Pearson Correlation	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)								
	N	383							
Work Performance	Pearson Correlation	.45**	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00							
	N	382	382						
Culture	Pearson Correlation	-.11*	.12*	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.04	.02						
	N	383	382	383					
Gender Disparity	Pearson Correlation	.14**	-.04	.24**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01	.42	.00					
	N	383	382	383	383				
Gender Inequality	Pearson Correlation	.29**	.14**	-.30**	-.15**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	.01	.00	.00				
	N	383	382	383	383	383			
Gender	Pearson Correlation	.07	-.08	-.26**	-.09	.23**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.19	.10	.00	.07	.00			
	N	383	382	383	383	383	383		
Age	Pearson Correlation	.04	.02	.01	.06	-.06	-.10	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.44	.66	.86	.23	.27	.06		
	N	383	38	383	383	383	383	383	
Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	.04	.16**	.13**	.04	-.06	-.08	-.05	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.46	.00	.01	.45	.26	.12	.30	
	N	381	380	381	381	381	381	381	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation in Table 14 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable culture, moderating variable gender inequality, mediating variables gender disparity and work performance with the dependent variable employees' perspective towards gender equality.

The relationship between gender disparity and employees' perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu in Table 14 is statistically significant with ($r=.14, p = 0.01 < 0.05$). There exists a significant relationship between the two variables gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality. The relationship between work performance and employees' perceptions towards gender equality is statistically significant with ($r = .45, p = 0.00 < 0.05$). Table 14 shows that the relationship between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality is statistically significant with ($r= -.11, p = 0.04 < 0.05$). There is a relationship between employees' culture and the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 14 indicates that the relationship between age and employees' perceptions towards gender equality is not statistically significant with ($r=.04, p = .44 > 0.05$). It has also demonstrated that there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and employees' perceptions towards gender equality with a ($r=.07, p = .19 > 0.05$).

To establish whether there was a statistically significant relationship between moderating variable gender inequality and perceptions towards gender equality, Table 14, shows that there is a statistically significant relationship with ($r=.29, p = 0.00 < 0.05$) but there is no statistically significant relationship between moderating variable education and the dependent variable perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace with the following ($r = .04, p = .46 > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be said that

there was no statistically significant relationship between education and employees' perceptions towards gender equality.

These results show that there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables culture, gender disparity, work performance, and gender inequality with perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu. However, there is no statistically significant relationship between independent variable age, gender and moderating variable education with the independent variable employees' perspective towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu.

The correlation Table 14 shows that gender, gender disparity, level of education and gender inequality correlate strongly with culture meaning that there is a probability that the effect of culture on employees' perceptions towards gender equality can be compromised, a stepwise regression and moderation was also used. This was to enable the finding out if the variable of interest culture still has the same strength towards employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Multiple Regression

Multiple regression was used to respond to Research questions 3, 4 and 5. This analysis was run using the stepwise regression option to determine how much variance was explained by three independent variables (culture, gender, and age), and how much variance was explained by moderating variables (gender inequality and education) and if it would have a statistically significant correlation with the dependent variable (perceptions towards gender equality). Further it was also used to determine the variance explained by the mediating variables (gender disparity and work performance) on the dependent variable (perceptions towards gender equality).

The results of the analyses were then reported and interpreted in Table 15 the model summary, The tests and scales used are fit for the purpose as seen from Table 15.

Table 15. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.56 ^a	.32	.30	.62	.32	24.57	7	372	.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), gender inequality, Age, Level of Education, Gender Disparity, Work Performance, Gender, Culture

The results in Table 15 show that the three independent variables (culture, Gender and age), two moderating variables (education and gender inequality) and two mediating variables (gender disparity and work performance) indicates a good level of prediction of the dependent variable with R at .562 since a value greater than 0.4 shows that the model is effective enough to determine the relationship between the variables (Jain & Chetty, 2019, LAERD Statistics, 2018). R^2 lies between 0 and 1 where R^2 greater than .5 indicates that the model is fit (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014). There is no rule of thumb regarding the appropriateness of the R^2 as it varies according to the research area (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014). For cross-sectional studies, .30 is commonly regarded as appropriate (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2014). A low R^2 for cross sectional studies does not mean that the model is not fit just as a high R^2 does not mean that a model is good because human behavior is difficult to predict and has low R^2 (Dhakal, 2018). The R^2 in this model for this study is .30 hence it is appropriate as it is required to have a minimum difference between R^2 and adjusted R^2 . In this study R^2 is .32 and adjusted R^2 is .30 hence minimum difference and good fit. According to the model summary R^2 shows that a variance of 32% of the employees' perceptions towards Gender equality at the workplace is explained by the independent variables in

the regression model and the F-statistic is significant with ($R = .56$, $R^2 = .30$; $F_{(7, 372)} = 24.57$, $p = .00 < 0.05$). Therefore, the regression model fits the data hence it was good to be used for the study.

Table 16 the ANOVA presents the statistical significance of the model in its prediction of the dependent variable.

Table 16. ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	65.16	7	9.31	24.57	.00 ^b
Residual	140.94	372	.38		
Total	206.11	379			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

b. Predictors: (Constant), gender inequality, Age, Level of Education, Gender Disparity, Work Performance, Gender, Culture

The Table 16 ANOVA intends to show that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable (Dhakal, 2018). Therefore, the ANOVA Table 16 shows that the independent variables in the regression analysis, statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, ($F_{(7, 372)}=24.57$, $p0.00<0.05$).

Regression Sum of Squares at 65.16 as the total variance explained in the dependent variable by the regression analysis is good. *F-statistic* that is greater than 1 result in a good model (Jain & Chetty, 2019) and the ANOVA for this study *F-Statistic* is 24.57 which is good. The *P-value* is 0.00 which is less than the significance level of 0.05 and this means that the independent variables are fit for the analysis on the dependent variable (LAERD Statistics, 2018). Therefore, the regression model is a good fit of the data.

Research Question 1

The relationship between gender disparity and perception towards gender inequality at the work place in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

A correlation analysis was carried out to help determine the relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and it was statistically significant. Table 17 shows the coefficient of determination for the variable gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the work place.

Table 17. Gender Disparity Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.83	.29		6.24	.00	1.25	2.40		
Gender Disparity	.19	.04	.23	5.22	.00	.12	.26	.93	1.08

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

As indicated by the beta in the coefficients of determination Table 17, there is a relationship between gender disparity and employees' perception towards gender equality by a variance of .23 and is statistically significant ($\beta=.23$, $t = 5.22$, $p=.00 < 0.05$).

This means that there is a relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Earlier in the study gender disparity had been defined to mean differences in women's and men's access to resources, status and well-being (EIGE, 2016). This has been used interchangeably in some studies but this study has adopted the difference where gender inequality means the unequal treatment of people based on gender. Then it can be stated that gender

disparity is as a result of gender inequality. The findings of the study have confirmed that there is a relationship between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality, therefore the way one grants access to resources, status and wellbeing has a relationship with one's perception towards gender equality as a human resource or decision maker in the company.

Gender disparity was confirmed in an Icelandic study (Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir & Nesaule, 2018 p13) where the study found that gender equality in terms of “performance evaluations, access to training and development, information sharing, compensation, and equal participation in decision-making” which in this study is defined as gender disparity affected the employees' perceptions of gender equality at the workplace (Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir & Nesaule, 2018 p13). This was despite the statement on gender equality which was in the organization that was found not to have any effect on the employees' perspective on gender equality (Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir & Nesaule, 2018 p13). Having a statement on gender equality in the organization had no significant effect but the proactivity in showing gender parity yielded positive results and the organization benefited from the fruits of positive employees' perceptions of gender equality at the workplace.

Equal access can be achieved if the perceptions towards gender equality of the decision makers in the company is positive because if there is no positive perception towards gender equality, then some employees are disadvantaged sustaining gender inequality (Foley, 2019) at the workplace. Another study's outcome indicates that this can affect the human resource, manager or decision maker's decision on whom to grant access to certain resources, opportunities or promotion (Hirsh, 2019). In the study, female employees were being underpaid despite the fact that they had same education and job positions with their male

counterparts due to the managers perceptions towards gender equality. The perception affected how salaries and wages were decided for the different genders. Similarly, women's access to labour market was less because 75% of their time was spent on unpaid work compromising their time for paid labour (Charmes, 2019). The disparity is caused because there is disparity starting from the homes where unpaid labour is concentrated only on women due to perceptions towards gender equality. If there was equal share of the amount of the unpaid work, then there would be equal access to labour market where there is paid work. But Charmes (2019) has reported that she has not yet come across a country that is practicing share of equal amount of unpaid work.

Similarly, this affects men because due to the perceptions towards gender equality the society has, men are finding it hard to take up female gendered jobs (Yavorsky & Dill, 2022) both at the workplace or at home thereby causing gender disparity. In one study, Aspinall, (2020) mentioned some of the reasons for gender disparity which vary from cultural values, cultural segregation and traditional roles between men and women, segregation of roles in the society (Aspinall 2021).

These findings should inform decision makers that there is a relationship between their perceptions towards gender equality and how they decide on employees' access to resources and opportunities. They should have a relook on how they perceive gender equality and do a background evaluation of the cause for the gender disparity in the organization. This is what should be addressed so that the perception towards gender equality at the workplace should promote gender parity and not gender disparity. After looking at the results and its correlation with the literature, *Ho1* that gender disparity has no effect on employees' perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu is rejected.

Research Question 2

Relationship between employees' performance and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

A correlation analysis was run to help find out the relationship between work performance and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the work place. Table 18 present the findings of research question 2 on the relationship between the variable employees' performance and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 18. Work Performance Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.83	.29		6.24	.00	1.25	2.40		
Work Performance	.35	.04	.45	10.08	.00	.28	.42	.92	1.08

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Table 18 shows that a relationship exists between work performance and employees' perception towards gender equality by a variance of .45 which is statistically significant ($\beta = .45$, $t = 10.08$, $p = .00 < 0.05$).

This finding is supported by other studies which have shown similar results. A recent study by Babarinde, Ojo, Omoyele, and Aigbedion, (2022) also confirmed that gender inequality at the workplace had a significant relationship with employees' performance.

There may be policies in the company which promote gender equality or encourage employees but if that is not put into practice, then employees are not satisfied. Employees need to be motivated and encouraged for them to perform at

work (Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir & Nesaule, 2018). If an employee is faced with bias, discrimination or unfairness in the way is being treated or accessing the opportunities is limited, they are discouraged. This affects their work performance (Babarinde, Ojo, Omoyele, & Aigbedion, 2022) because they perceive gender equality negatively and their boss's perception about gender equality is not promoting gender equality and gender parity at the workplace. The different treatment and different offers to access resources and opportunities, mounts to bias, discrimination and unfairness causing loss of job satisfaction (Babarinde, Ojo, Omoyele, & Aigbedion, 2022) thereby affecting their work performance (Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir & Nesaule, 2018) and it is the organization that misses out on the benefits of job satisfaction and good work performance. According to Einarsdóttir, Ólafsdóttir and Nesaule, (2018) p13 the organization benefits from the positive perceptions of gender equality by employees at the workplace. Otherwise lack of job satisfaction has seen many young people leave their jobs for better opportunities causing a high turnover of youthful employees affecting the organization's performance.

Whether men suffer the same as relationship between work performance and employees' perspective towards gender equality at the workplace was also confirmed by another study where it stated that men who found themselves in female gendered roles even though they were highly paying jobs, they left those jobs because of dissatisfaction due to stereotyping and stigmatization connected with the job (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020). The study demonstrated that where gender equality is not taken into account when assigning job positions or providing incentives, the gender that is disadvantaged feels demoralized and becomes careless with the job. The study encouraged organizations not to favor one gender for it to benefit from the employee's performance at the workplace. This is one way where work performance

and perceptions towards gender equality is observed. The stigma that the female gendered job carries, causes men to leave the job.

Social expectations affecting the way people perceive gender equality also have influenced the way people treat each other at work affecting the work performance which may be positive or negative. This has also been attributed to unconscious bias where according to ILO, (2017) this unconscious bias stems from socialization from society where we find different traditions, cultural values and norms that one has lived and experienced in a society they have grown up in (ILO, 2017). This is where due to the unconscious bias, a man doing what is termed a woman's job and a woman doing a man's job is regarded as a social deviant hence it affects their performance on that particular job. Work performance would have an effect on the company's productivity as Mizrahi and Moleketi (2015) reported that the price of constraining women from accessing economic activities costs the society because the performance is affected due to the perspective of the society towards gender equality (Mizrahi and Moleketi (2015). The literature reviewed agrees with the finding of this study that work performance has a relationship with perceptions towards gender equality hence *Ho2* that there is no relationship between work performance and employees' perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu is rejected.

Research Question 3

To determine to what extent does culture affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

Regression analysis was run to determine the extent to which culture affects employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. The findings in the

Table 19 show the effect of culture on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 19. Culture Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized		Standardize		Sig.	95% Confidence		Collinearity	
	Coefficients		d			Interval for B		Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.83	.29		6.24	.00	1.25	2.40		
Culture	-.12	.04	-.14	-2.87	.00	-.20	-.04	.81	1.24

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Table 19 shows how the variable culture affects negatively the variance of the employees' perception towards gender equality at the workplace by -.14 and is statistically significant with ($\beta = -.14$, $t = -2.87$, $p = .00 < 0.05$).

This finding also supports the social cognitive theory by Bussey and Bandura (1999) that human knowledge to some extent relates to the observation of one's habitat, surrounding, exchanges and what they go through as they grow up resulting in social expectations leading to social constructions of their gender roles. Therefore, the way male and female children are evaluated and treated in society and homes shape their perceptions towards the distribution of gender roles and how they can access the resources associated with their role. This is where culture affects the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Another theory that the findings agree with is the gender schema theory which states that children learn from their culture who a boy is and who a girl is and what is socially expected of the boy and what is socially expected of the girl. The way they behave and interact with others should be in conformity with the norms of the society and social expectations identifying their different gender roles through socialization and cultural practices. This follows that the attitudes and behaviour

conform to the expectations as dictated their society (Bussey & Bandura 1999) and a child is praised when his or her behaviour is seen as sex (gender) appropriate, and, ridiculed or reprimanded when they deviate from the established cultural norms. It is this gender schema theory that was used to explore the extent to which culture affects the perspectives of male and female towards gender equality.

The finding has also confirmed some of the earlier studies such by Kameri-Mbote, (2003) where she found that sexual stereotyping plays a big role in socialization of male and female in a cultural context in the society. Similarly, the discussion on cultural dimension by Hofstede in 2011, he reported that culture is one of the key effectors of gender inequality in society (Hofstede, 2011) which is also confirmed by Oppong (2013) statement that the African will always be influenced by their cultural values. Recent studies have likewise supported this for instance, a 2015 report by UNFPA stated that cultural practices have put many women in a disadvantaged position (UNFPA, 2015). Even words used in society contributes to stereotypes affecting employees' perceptions on gender inequality at the workplace (Grobman, 2019). The 2020 study by Zhivka (2020) reported male dominance in society which culturally placed male supremacy over women's oppression in most social systems (Zhivka, 2020). Also, in Malawi Norwack (2018) attributed failure of approving legislation criminalizing polygamy and early child marriages in a parliament dominated by men to Malawi's cultural context (Norwack, 2018).

Even the symbols that are used to convey messages of what a boy or a girl should do such as toys targeted for boys and for girls. These toys instill the role of an individual as they grow up playing their socially created role. These social roles create perceptions towards gender equality in boys and girls when allocating roles playfully. Then it is these perceptions that are carried over to the workplace placing

women in a subordinate position in accordance to the cultural belief. Due to the perceptions towards gender equality, women are denied their human rights and remain in subordinate positions in their homes and their families. It is such cultural beliefs that influence even women ending up supporting the social norms and social expectations which make them not to support a female boss but a male boss or support their fellow female employee (Carter, 2022, Gonzalez, 2019 & Charmes, 2019). Furthermore, culture breeds stereotyping which plays a role in the perceptions towards gender equality due to the social constructs (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020) where assuming feminine roles by man would socially blemish the male employee. This leaves men in dilemma of either taking up the challenge and defy the norms by engaging in female gendered jobs. Those who do, mostly end up resigning the highly paying female gendered job to a lower paying male gendered job even if the wage is lower than the previous female gendered job (Yavorsky & Dill, 2020).

On the same note, creating room for gender equality at the workplace, creates gender inequality because the perceptions towards gender equality are influenced by culture. For instance, policies to favour women (Verniers, 2018 & Straus, 2018) are handled with the eye of perceptions towards gender equality which is already inculcated in the minds of the decision makers at the workplace or fellow worker be it a man or a woman. They therefore become obstacles to perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Likewise, in Malawi there has been the spirit of promoting gender equality supported by both men and women, coming up with laws and policies against gender inequality (Kayuni, 2017). However, the cultural expectations and social expectations stemming from the cultural norms, values and practices of the society become an obstacle because the man will be regarded not acting as a man but acting as a woman or a woman acting like a man which in this context is socially

unacceptable. This was also reflected in Malawi when a former Malawian Minister of gender, children, and welfare services had on one occasion mentioned that Malawi's persistence of gender inequality is affected by attitudes of stereotyping, negative cultural norms, beliefs and cultural practices (Klaveren, Tijdens, Hughie-Williams, & Martin, 2009). Therefore, the study in the medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City confirms this statement about culture being a catalyst of gender inequality in Malawi. Since Mzuzu is found in Malawi which is a country belonging to Africa therefore some of its culture could be embedded in the African culture of patriarchal dominance (Lovell, 2021) whose practices promote gender inequality. The human resource findings also show that there is gender inequality in the enterprises in Mzuzu City.

The results show that Mzuzu City, has culture as one of its obstacles to gender equality. Culture has influence on the perceptions of gender equality at the workplace. Therefore, the *H₀₃* that culture does not affect employees' perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu is rejected.

Therefore, to deal with the issue of gender inequality in the enterprises in Mzuzu City, raising awareness on the effects of culture on gender equality strategies should be at the top of the agenda.

Research Question 4

To determine the effect of employees' age on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the work place in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

A regression analysis was run to determine the effect of employees' age on employees' perceptions towards gender equality. Table 20 presents the findings on how age affects employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the work place.

Table 20. Age Coefficients^a

Table 29: Age Coefficients									
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	95.0% Confidence Interval for B				Collinearity Statistics	
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.83	.29		6.24	.00	1.25	2.40		
Age	.02	.03	.03	.72	.47	-.04	.08	.98	1.02

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Table 20 indicates that Age increases employees' perception towards gender equality at the workplace by .03 and it is not statistically significant with ($\beta = .03$, $t = .72$, $p = .47 > 0.05$).

The findings of the study in both Pearson correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination have found that age had no statistically significant effect on perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Literature discussed has shown that there are other factors that happen at certain ages such as child bearing and rearing that influence the perception towards gender equality at the workplace (Gander, 2014).

Literature reviewed indicated that women disappear from employment during the reproductive segment of their life cycle, that is child bearing and child rearing period. The disappearance is during the age when women bear and rear children hence age is not the reason because same age but without a child or children, the woman continues with the employment. Wooll (2021) stated and confirmed this when she stated that senior women and childless women did not face the predicament of women going through the reproductive period (Wooll, 2021). A Nigerian study had stated that only when age and gender are combined at the nature given role of child bearing and rearing did it influence the perceptions of decision makers at the workplace (Umesi, 2021). Since a decision maker is also an employee, it can be said that the employees' perspective towards gender equality is influenced. Ammerman

and Groyberg (2021) reported that there is a more balanced distribution of roles and balanced representation at the workplace in lower job positions than at senior position whose ages are before child bearing and rearing. As soon as the woman begins to have children, there is a difference in treatment by employers of the woman with children and that of without children (Umesi, 2021 and Carter, 2022) within the same age range.

This therefore is clear that at this time, it is not the age but the events associated with age that influence the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Hence, the *H₀₄* that, age has no effect on employees' perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu, cannot be rejected.

Research Question 5

To determine the impact of gender on employees' perceptions towards gender inequality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City.

A regression analysis was conducted to determine the impact of gender on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Table 21 helps to answer question 5 on the impact of gender on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 21. Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.83	.29		6.24	.00	1.25	2.40		
Gender	.08	.07	.05	1.17	.24	-.05	.21	.90	1.12

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

In Table 21, Gender increases the employees' perception towards gender equality at the workplace by .05 but is not statistically significant with ($\beta = .05$, $t = 1.17$, $p = .24 > 0.05$).

This does not agree with earlier study by Gander (2014) who found that gender influences perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace (Gander, 2014). This can be attributed to the earlier studies which were not objective and wore the face of a woman as gender equality was about women (EIGE, 2023). There are also more recent studies that show that gender influences the employees' perceptions towards gender equality. In 2019, another study also confirmed the 2014 (Gander, 2014) study that women and men differ in their perceptions on gender bias (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019). However, the study also stated that it was due to the context of the person he had grown up in that dictated their position regarding gender equality in society. Foley (2019) also supported this stand by stating that opportunities and wages are pegged to gender thereby influencing the perceptions of employees regarding gender equality at the workplace (Foley, 2019). It was also stated that perceptions towards gender equality differed among men and women due to socialization and the effects of social expectations (Charmes, 2019). In the study by Charmes (2019), this was attributed to the stereotyping and socialization of the employees affecting their perceptions towards gender equality.

On the contrary, during the same period, ILO (2017) referred to gender inequality or gender equality as being unconscious bias stemming from socialization from society where we find different traditions, cultural values and norms that one has lived and experienced in a society they have grown up in (ILO, 2017). This unconscious bias affects both the male and female decision makers due to the socialization or the way one was brought up. Men and women grow up with

perceptions of who a man is and who a woman is and what is their position in society (Garcia-Gonzalez, 2019) in their contexts.

Therefore, they concluded that gender in itself or being a man or a woman does not affect the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. The study where an executive female officer dismissed a female employee because she was pregnant (Carter, 2022) shows that gender does not affect the perceptions towards gender equality. This was the case with a lady employee (Carter 2022) who was fired by her female boss because she was pregnant and was deemed not fit to work (Carter, 2022). A woman subjecting her fellow woman to gender inequality at the workplace cannot be about gender. Female managers reacting negatively to their fellow female employees (Carter, 2022) can only be attributed to their socialization in their culture. These studies show that gender in itself has no effect on the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace unless it is associated with the reproduction period (Umesi, 2021). Both women and men have shown that they respond differently to the supervisors in accordance to their gender. A woman will respect and cast more importance on the post if it is occupied by a male manager but if it is occupied by a woman, the same employee will not show the same respect and will not take the office occupant as serious (Yarvosky & Dill 2020). This is due to the unconscious bias (Chipeta, 2023) as cultural practices influence the way the employees will respond to their supervisor if it's a male or female or the manager reaction for their supervisees depending on their gender.

Literature has revealed that even men have shown support for gender equality (EIGE, 2023). This has been through policies (Kayuni, 2017) or through the numerous researches and providing recommendations. In the case of Malawi, policies, laws have been enacted and put in place (Kayuni, 2017) by the parliament

dominated by men. But as seen in the study of Gonzalez (2019), having policies, law or regulation is not effective on changing the perspective on gender equality. Malawi has had Parliament passing laws on gender equality and at the same time block those that violated the culture and cultural practices of Malawi (Norwak, 2018).

This takes upon the understanding that gender when socialized has an influence on perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace depending on the society the employee or the supervisor was socialized in taking into account the cultural gender norms. This is why even policies in favour of gender equality end up being obstacles to gender equality (Verniers, 2018). Even though gender has an effect on the perceptions towards gender equality it is insignificant. This confirms that gender has no significant effect on the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and *Ho5* that gender does not affect the perceptions towards gender equality in Mzuzu cannot be rejected.

Stepwise Regression

Due to the heavy correlation of some independent variables, a stepwise regression was conducted to verify the independent variables that significantly influence the dependent variable employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Table 22 is the model summary showing the R^2 and the adjusted R^2 of each of the variable.

Table 22. Stepwise Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.45 ^a	.20	.20	.66	.20	93.90	1	378	.00
2	.47 ^b	.23	.22	.65	.03	12.58	1	377	.00
3	.52 ^c	.27	.26	.63	.04	22.62	1	376	.00
4	.56 ^d	.31	.31	.62	.04	24.06	1	375	.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture

c. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity

d. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity, Gender Inequality

The model summary which is a prediction model contained four of the seven independent variables reached in four steps. Table 22 shows same amount of predictive value as the standard regression analysis.

The model was statistically significant at all the four steps with ($R=.56$, $R^2 = .31$, adjusted $R^2 = .31$) which is similar to the standard regression analysis. The minimal difference between the R^2 and adjusted R^2 is an indication that the sample size was sufficient. For a cross sectional study, the model is good.

Table 23 established the statistical significance of the regression model.

Table 23. Stepwise ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.01	1	41.01	93.90	.00 ^b
	Residual	165.09	378	.44		
	Total	206.11	379			
2	Regression	46.34	2	23.17	54.68	.00 ^c
	Residual	159.76	377	.42		
	Total	206.11	379			
3	Regression	55.41	3	18.47	46.08	.00 ^d
	Residual	150.70	376	.40		
	Total	206.11	379			
4	Regression	64.49	4	16.12	42.70	.00 ^e
	Residual	141.61	375	.38		
	Total	206.11	379			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance

c. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture

d. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity

e. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity, Gender Inequality

Table 23 shows that the four steps of the stepwise regression were statistically significant at all levels with b. ($F_{(1, 41)} = 93.90$, p 0.00 < 0.05), c. ($F_{(2, 23.172)} = 54.68$, p 0.00 < 0.05), d. ($F_{(3, 18.469)} = 46.08$, p 0.00 < 0.05), d. ($F_{(4, 16.123)} = 42.70$, p 0.00 < 0.05) therefore, with the four variables, the F-statistic is statistically significant hence the model is a good predictor of the independent variable perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 24 helps to show the measure of variance for each variable and their strength in the variance.

Table 24. Stepwise Coefficients^a

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.91	.13		22.69	.00	2.66	3.16		
	Work Performance	.35	.04	.45	9.69	.00	.28	.42	1.00	1.00
2	(Constant)	3.21	.15		21.13	.00	2.91	3.51		
	Work Performance	.36	.04	.47	10.20	.00	.29	.43	.99	1.02
	Culture	-.14	.04	-.16	-3.55	.00	-.22	-.06	.99	1.02
3	(Constant)	2.72	.18		15.21	.00	2.37	3.08		
	Work Performance	.37	.03	.48	10.82	.00	.31	.44	.98	1.02
	Culture	-.19	.04	-.22	-4.72	.00	-.27	-.11	.92	1.08
	Gender Disparity	.18	.04	.22	4.76	.00	.10	.25	.94	1.07
4	(Constant)	1.99	.23		8.64	.00	1.53	2.44		
	Work Performance	.35	.03	.45	10.17	.00	.28	.41	.95	1.05
	Culture	-.13	.04	-.15	-3.17	.00	-.21	-.05	.84	1.19
	Gender Disparity	.19	.04	.23	5.25	.00	.12	.26	.93	1.08
	Gender Inequality	.20	.04	.22	4.91	.00	.12	.28	.88	1.14

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Table 24 is the coefficient table with the weights each of the four variable, work performance, culture, gender disparity and gender inequality are contributing to the model in the prediction of the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Table 24 has established that Work performance receive the strongest weight in the model with a $\beta = .45$, gender disparity $\beta = .23$, gender inequality $\beta = .22$ and culture with a negative low $\beta = -.15$. These results both the standard and the stepwise regression analysis are the same meaning that the multicollinearity was insignificant and does not affect the model.

Moderating Variables

An independent variable's effect on an independent variable can be affected by other variables. In this study, culture has been found to have a statistically significant effect on employees' perceptions towards gender equality. To test if the strength of culture is affected by variables gender inequality and Education were considered. Regression analysis was used to investigate the strength of the relationship between the independent variable culture and independent variable employees' perceptions towards gender equality.

Gender Inequality

Firstly, regression analysis was used to determine the effect of gender inequality as a moderating variable between the independent variable culture and the dependent variable employees' perceptions. Table 25 shows gender inequality has a moderating effect between culture and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and contributes to the independent (culture) variables' effect on the outcome variable perspectives towards gender equality at the workplace.

Table 25. Gender Inequality Regression Coefficient in Moderation Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.33	.12		36.89	.00
Culture	-.09	.04	-.11	-2.07	.04
2 (Constant)	4.35	.12		37.60	.00
Culture	-.11	.04	-.13	-2.59	.01
InteractionGenderInequality	-.12	.03	-.19	-3.65	.00

Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

To establish whether gender inequality as a moderating variable contributes to independent variable culture which influencing the employees' perspectives towards gender equality at the workplace. The coefficient of determination in Table 25 shows

that the perceived gender inequality in the society has a negative moderating effect on employees' perception towards gender equality at the workplace with a variance of $-.19$ and is statistically significant with ($\beta = -.19, t = -3.65, p = .00 < 0.05$). This contribution is statistically significant as the p-value is less than 0.05 . This indicates that gender inequality as perceived in the society has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality.

This is applicable to both genders as it can be seen from literature that both male and female bosses are bound to make decisions that promote gender inequality in a company (Carter, 2022) a case where a female boss fired a female employee because she was pregnant. Literature has revealed the role of socialization of the social norms, values, cultural practices, social expectations in the shaping of one's attitudes and behavior in society or cultural context which affects the perceptions of people in that context (Kameri-Mbote, 2003). Literature has also revealed that Malawi being an African country whose attainment of gender equality is lagging behind as reflected in the findings of Mzuzu City is affected by its deep-rooted cultural practices which in its context promote gender inequality (Hofstede, 2011). Therefore, gender inequality as practiced in the society contributes to the way people will perceive gender equality at the workplace.

Education

Secondly, regression analysis was used to help show if education has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Results in Table 26 help to show the moderation effect.

Table 26. Education Regression Coefficient in Moderation analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.33	.12		36.95	.00
	Culture	-.09	.04	-.10	-2.04	.04
2	(Constant)	4.35	.12		36.61	.00
	Culture	-.10	.05	-.11	-2.15	.03
	InteractionEducation	.03	.04	.04	.75	.45

Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Table 26 shows that the level of education has an insignificant moderating effect between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and at the same time it is not statistically significant with ($\beta = -.04$, $t = .75$, $p = .45 < 0.05$). The InteractionEducation has a *P-value* of .45 which is statistically insignificant hence its moderation effect between culture and perspectives towards gender equality is insignificant. Education has for a long time, since the 18th century been used as a means of achieving gender equality in many sectors and one of them at the workplace (Guyen, 2022 & MacGregor, 2012). This finding agrees with the gender equality index that found that education has attained parity in a few countries such as Rwanda, Iceland, Norway, Sweden but gender equality globally is at 62.9% in the same index (Zahidi, 2022). Even though Global gender gap index of 2022 shows that Iceland is closing both gaps, education at .99 and gender equality gap at .908 (Whiting, 2022) there are studies in the past which have shown otherwise. Another study in 2018 in Iceland had admitted to having education parity but still experiencing gender inequality at the workplace especially in pay gaps and trade (Olafsdottir, 2018). There is a need for a research study on Iceland to provide recent reports that would depend on the scientific findings on gender inequality in Iceland.

In Africa Rwanda is topping the list on the index with education parity at .96 (Whiting, 2022). However, a 2017 study by the IMF (2017) reported that Rwanda despite topping the gender equality global index is still experiencing gender inequality

at the workplace with regards to wage differences (International Monetary Fund. African Dept., 2017). Female employees are still undergoing wage inequality and that they are also underrepresented in white collar paying jobs (International Monetary Fund. African Dept., 2017). They are concentrated in the blue-collar job where most women are in self-paying agriculture activities (International Monetary Fund. African Dept., 2017). Therefore, economically they are still below. These studies confirm the findings that education has an insignificant impact on perspectives towards gender equality at the workplace.

In Malawi, education parity has been reached in primary and secondary school level with some instances, girls being more than boys. As seen in literature review, Malawi literacy rate for women has progressed almost reaching parity with women at 55.2% while men are at 69.8 % (HSRC, 2021) p3 and primary school enrolment rate is higher for girls at 97.1% and 92% for boys as well as the secondary school level where girls are 34.8% and boys at 33.7% (HSRC, 2021) p3. However, at tertiary level is where the inequality begins where boys are more than the girls in schools (HSRC, 2021). Therefore, progress towards education parity can be seen but gender inequality at the workplace still continue to persists especially at the senior positions with male employee at 84.4% and female employees 15.6% (HSRC, 2021).

There is a need for an improved strategy to promote gender equality at the workplace through education. Culture is learned at an early age in a child's life (Motevalli, Saffari, Michael, Abadi, 2022) when they begin to form their identity and values and beliefs. The first three years of life of a child are crucial, the child's brain evolves rapidly and absorbs their surrounding (Maleq, Fuentes, Akkari, 2022), it is important to invoke early informal education on gender equality at home during this time. The probability of the effectiveness of gender equality education at an advanced

age beyond the early ages of 0 to 5 years when children are already acculturated and the norms of their culture are deep-rooted, carries minimal effect. Therefore, education on gender equality should start at an early stage in life where parents are involved during which time a child is being acculturated by the people they trust.

Gender Inequality at the Workplace Model after the Study

The final conceptual framework Figure 6 show that culture moderated by the gender inequality influences perspectives of gender equality is mediated by gender disparity and work performance. It shows the relationship between perspectives of gender equality and work performance.

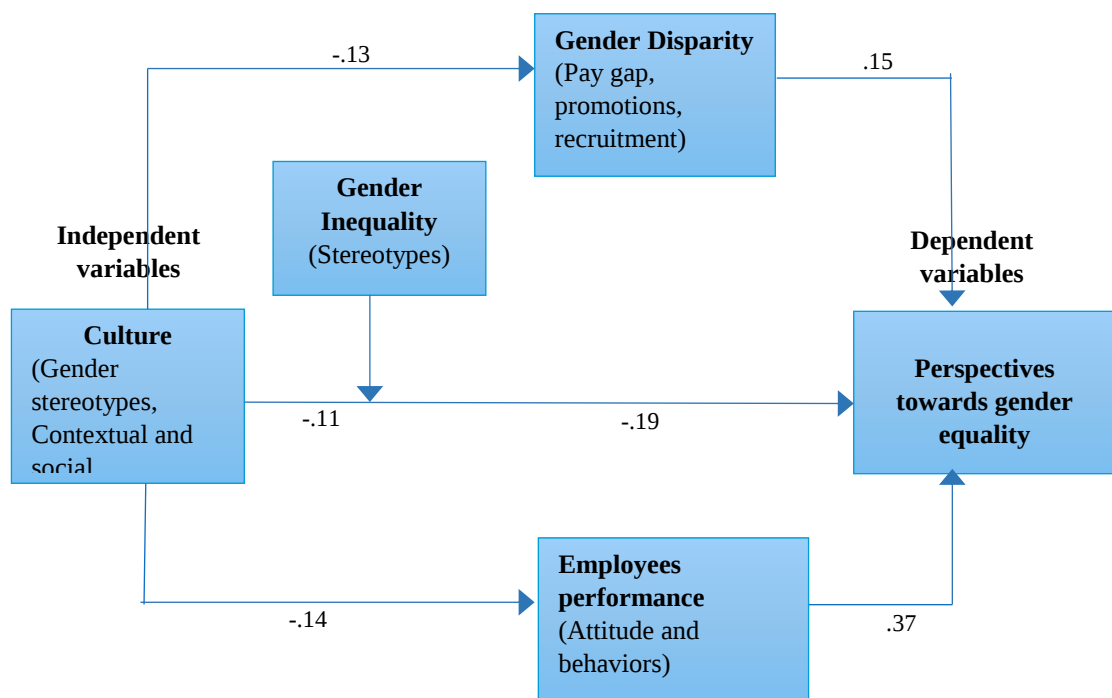


Figure 6. Gender Inequality at the Workplace Model Based on the Results of the Study
Source: Researchers own model

The model Figure 6 has taken into consideration the moderating variables education and gender inequality and mediating variables gender disparity and work performance which also can be associated with the prediction of the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi. The conceptual framework indicates that culture affects employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and that the gender inequality perceptions in the society affect the perceptions of employees towards gender equality at the workplace. It also indicates that there is a relationship between gender disparity and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and that there is also a relationship between work performance and perceptions of the employees towards gender equality at the workplace.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a summary, conclusion and recommendation of the findings for the study on the persistence of gender inequality and disparity in enterprises and its effect on work performance in Malawi.

Summary

Gender equality is a topic which has been embraced in Malawi since 1979 when it ratified the CEDAW, which was intended to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life (Malawi Law Commission, 2011). This was even constitutionalized into the supreme law of the land (Section 20 of the Malawi constitution) and yet gender inequality continues to persist in Mzuzu City, in Malawi. There have been policies which have been promulgated in different circles such as enterprises so as to promote gender equality at the workplace but gender inequality continues to persist.

The human resource questionnaire response Table 10, indicated that gender inequality is still persisting in the organizations in Mzuzu City according to the distribution of roles in the leadership positions. Males dominate in the workplace especially in the leadership positions in Mzuzu City.

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to explore the persistence of gender inequality and gender disparity among employees and its impact on work performance at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu, Malawi.

The research used a cross-sectional quantitative study, following a positivist paradigm. It was used to explore the relationship between employees' perspectives towards gender equality and mediating variable gender disparity; and employees' perspective towards gender equality and mediating variable work performance at the workplace in Mzuzu City. It was further used to explore the effect of independent variables culture, age and gender on the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace and the moderating effect on the strength by the moderating variables Education and gender inequality on the strength between the effect of culture, the significant variable and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. Pearson correlation and regression analysis were used to reject and not reject the hypotheses for the study.

According to the findings, gender inequality and disparity is still felt at the work place and variables have been established to either have a relationship with or have an influence on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Correlation analysis was done which showed that the mediating variables gender disparity and work performance correlate significantly with employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace hence they have a significant relationship with the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. This is important as it shows that there is a relationship between gender disparity and employees' perceptions towards gender equality and also between work performance and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City. These findings tend to agree with literature as most of the literature is confirmed that there is a relationship between work performance and employees' perceptions towards gender equality and that there is a relationship

between gender disparity and perceptions towards gender equality. This confirms literature regarding workers being demoralized where there is gender inequality and gender disparity at the workplace affecting the work performance. Having written policies is not effective but the practice in the workplace is what affects the perceptions of the employees and motivates them to work hard at the workplace once they feel they are being treated the same or accessing resources and opportunities the same way.

On whether culture has a statistically significant effect on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City. Analysis of the data through multiple regression has shown that in the city of Mzuzu in Malawi, culture has a statistically significant effect on the perceptions of employees towards gender equality at the workplace. In the present study, the multiple regression analysis has shown that 14% of employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace is explained by culture and is statistically significant. The findings of this study tend to confirm that culture has an effect on the perceptions of employees towards gender equality at the workplace. Enculturation has an effect on the perceptions of people in their society that there is unconscious bias when dealing gender roles emanating from the social expectations and social constructs built early in life from the society. This is why despite the progress in some countries such as Rwanda in education as well as politically, there is still gender inequality being experienced in other sectors such as in the homes and workplace.

However, with regard to age, the study found that there was a minimal effect on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace with 3% in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City and that the effect was not statistically significant. This shows that age has no significant effect on the perceptions towards

gender equality at the workplace. The study has departed from the literature which stated that age has an effect on the perceptions of employees towards gender equality at the workplace.

Gender's impact on employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu City was not statistically significant with 5%. Gender is not statistically significant which means that its effect on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality is not likely. Literature reviewed showed a lot of support to this finding and a lot of others not supporting this finding. The finding that gender does not statistically significantly affect perceptions towards gender equality is still debatable and needs more studies.

Education as a moderating factor has no significant effect on the strength of effect between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace at 6% and is not statistically significant. This is contradictory to the purpose at which education has been used to promote gender equality. The findings of this study can explain why despite the parity in education gender equality and disparity continues to persist globally. This shows that improvement on education for women has not eliminated the persistence of gender inequality at the workplace in Mzuzu, Malawi.

Gender inequality as a moderating variable between culture and employees' perceptions towards gender equality explained 28% of the moderation effect and is statistically significant. This means that in the cultural context where there is gender inequality being practiced, perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace the effect of 28% is contributed to its contextual cultural influence. As most literature puts it, cultural practices promote gender inequality or gender equality because as children grow, they learn knowing what social expectations is there for a boy or what

social expectations is there for a girl and this tend to go to influence the perceptions employees have towards gender equality at the workplace.

Conclusion

It has been reported that Malawi has been progressing with implementation of gender equality supported by both men and women, coming up with laws and policies against gender inequality. Nevertheless, it can be seen from the research that Gender inequality and gender disparity continues to persist at the work place in Mzuzu City of Malawi attributing it to the perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

According to the findings of this study, mediator variable gender disparity has a relationship with employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi. The findings have also shown that mediator variable work performance has a relationship with employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi. Further, the study has established that culture has an effect on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

However, it has been found that age does not have an impact on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi. It is also evident from the findings that gender has no significant effect on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City, Malawi.

Further analysis was done on the link between culture and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace using the moderating variable gender inequality and education. Education as moderating variable has insignificant effect as a moderating variable on the perceptions of the employees towards gender equality at

the workplace in Mzuzu City where as gender inequality as a moderating factor was found to be a significant moderating variable on culture affecting the perceptions of the employees towards gender equality at the work place. Gender inequality as practiced in Mzuzu City has a moderating effect on the strength of culture's effect on the employees' perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

Finally, it can be stated that culture affects people's behavior, how they think and what views they hold shaping their perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace. At times, culture is more respected and is taken as more legitimate than the policies and laws in place. National policies are in place but the practice is different in the enterprises hence the perceptions are affected by the practices and not policies. Therefore, culture and gender inequality are the contributing factors to the inconsistencies in the progress towards gender equality and parity in Mzuzu City. Therefore, Mzuzu culture fails to effectively combat gender inequality at the workplace in Mzuzu City as the employees' perceptions are affected by cultural influences of the employees.

These results characterize Mzuzu City in Malawi to be high in gender inequality and gender disparity and therefore does not condemn gender inequality and gender disparity but justifies it. Due to cultural influence gender inequality and gender disparity continues to persist at the workplace despite the existing Malawian laws.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following are the recommendations that researchers and Mzuzu city should consider.

1. Development workers should mobilize of the Civil Society in Mzuzu City to call for a round table discussion involving all stakeholders in Mzuzu City to look at the cultural factors that are obstacles to gender equality and

gender parity at the workplace and how to address them according to the context.

2. Future studies on gender equality and parity to be contextualized because the major independent variable that seems to affect the perceptions of employees towards gender equality at the workplace is culture.

Generalization of the results in a different cultural context is difficult because world views about gender inequality and gender disparity may be different. Even in Malawi future studies at different regional levels is recommended as the cultural practices may differ from region to region affecting gender equality progress differently.

3. To come up with a better gender equality strategy and effective methods of overcoming the barriers that cause the persistence of the gender inequality at the workplace.
4. Parents and nursery schools should be seen as potential partners to gender equality education. Education actors should recognize that education after a child has already been enculturated has minimal effect.
5. Raising awareness to the management committees on the effects of gender inequality and gender disparity in the organization should be considered.
6. Considering that the dynamics of the city are changing, more research to be carried out using the same variables culture, age, gender and education so as to find out if the changing dynamics will not change the results.

Resolutions towards gender equality cannot take the same measures but different methods according to the context and setting therefore, responding to culture can improve the approach to responding to gender inequality and gender disparity at the workplace in Mzuzu City and be generalized to similar contexts in Malawi.

Suggestions for Future Research

The following are the suggestions for future research:

1. There is need for future research on a qualitative study to find out how men and women feel about gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City.
2. The study should also open for more investigations to establish the causation among the variables.
3. Further to this, more studies are needed in the South and center region of Malawi to establish whether the culture affect gender equality at the workplace as generalization of the results may be an issue.
4. Furthermore, research is needed to look into cultural factors which continue to hinder gender equality at the workplace in Mzuzu City. A study can be done to understand this reversal phenomenon and looking at a shift in analysis from women to men's behaviour. A qualitative study in the future, on whether gender inequality and gender disparity affect development efforts of the country of Malawi since there is a relationship between work performance and perceptions towards gender equality at the workplace.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled: The persistence of gender inequality and disparity in enterprises and its effect on work performance in Malawi: an analysis of culture, age, gender.

The purpose of this study is to explore the persistence of gender inequality among employees and its impact on gender disparity at the workplace in medium and large enterprises in Mzuzu, Malawi.

In order to participate in the study, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that has (40) simple questions about your opinion as an employee in an organization in Mzuzu City. Finishing the questionnaire should take approximately (20) minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you sign the bottom of this Form, it means that you are giving your consent to be in the study. You will NOT write your name on the questionnaire and this Form is separate from the questionnaire—this ensures that your identity will not be revealed. No one other than the researcher and advisers will have access to the data. All data will be kept on a password protected computer.

If you do not want to participate in the study, do not begin filling the questionnaire or participating in other research activities. If you start to fill the questionnaire and decide you do not want to participate, stop filling it and give it to the researcher. There is no penalty for not participating and your questionnaire will not be used.

If you participate, you will contribute to the knowledge about the growing body of awareness of gender equality and aid in filling some of the gaps in the way gender inequality is perceived in Malawi., which may help to create awareness and create a dialogue platform for gender-balanced actors to listen to each other on how to move beyond where Malawi is today while pursuing sustainable gender equality

progress. There are no identifiable risks in participation and you can answer with all honesty without fear. Your honest response is all that is needed.

The researcher will answer any questions that you have about the study and you should ask them now. If you have any complaints or any concerns whatsoever about this research, please contact the National Committee on Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities, National Commission for Science and Technology, on the following e-mail address: ncrsh@ncst.mw, Tel: +265 771 550/ 774 869; and the Chair of the AUA Institutional Ethics Review Committee: Dr Josephine Ganu, ganuj@aua.ac.ke, Telephone number: +254740481581 and Professor Jack K. Obey at jackiekobey@gmail.com, Tel: +254724270309.

Thank you.

Rubbie Mzumara Mtike

PhD in Leadership, Strategic Business Strand

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research.

Signature_____ Date _____

This study has been approved by the AUA Institutional Ethics Review Board.

APPENDIX B

PERMISSION TO USE PHOTOGRAPH(S)

Permission for Photography for Research Participants in Any Pictures Taken by Researcher

If any photographs or likenesses of you, a minor member of your family, or your property have been taken during this research, we request your permission to use them in a published document. Once the document is published, the photographs could appear in media, such as the internet.

Permission to use your photograph(s)/likeness is voluntary. You do not have to consent to participate in this study. You do not have to agree to have pictures taken or published.

In regard to publication of photographs/likenesses of me, a minor member of my family, or my property:	
☐ Yes ☐ No	I agree to be photographed and have the photographs used in a publication.
☐ Yes ☐ No	I give permission for a minor member of my family to be photographed and the photograph used in a publication.
☐ Yes ☐ No	I agree that my property can be photographed and the photograph used in a publication.
☐ Yes ☐ No	I do not give permission for any of the above uses of my photograph, likeness, minor family member, or property.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree to participate in this study.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX C

CORRESPONDENCES



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON
INSTITUTIONAL SCIENTIFIC ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE
UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA, BARATON
P.O. BOX 2500-30100, Eldoret, Kenya, East Africa

B0714082022

August 14, 2022

TO: Rubbie Mzumara Mlike
Strategic Business Leadership
Adventist University of Africa

Dear Rubbie,

RE: The Persistence of Gender Inequality and Disparity in Enterprises and its Effect on Work Performance in Malawi: An Analysis of Culture, Age, Gender

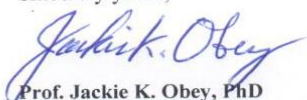
This is to inform you that the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) of the University of Eastern Africa Baraton has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is UEAB/ISERC/07/08/2022. The approval period is 14th August, 2022 – 14th June, 2023.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) of the University of Eastern Africa Baraton.
- iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) of the University of Eastern Africa Baraton within 72 hours of notification.
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) of the University of Eastern Africa Baraton within 72 hours.
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to the Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) of the University of Eastern Africa Baraton.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from the national research licensing office of Malawi and also obtain other clearances needed.

Sincerely yours,


Prof. Jackie K. Obey, PhD

Chairperson, Institutional Scientific Ethics Review Committee



A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING
CHARTERED 1991



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Lingadzi House
Robert Mugabe Crescent
P/Bag B303
City Centre
Lilongwe

Tel: +265 1 771 550
+265 1 774 189
+265 1 774 869
Fax: +265 1772 431
Email: directorgeneral@ncst.mw
Website: <http://www.ncst.mw>

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Ref No: NCST/RTT/2/6

28th September 2022

Mrs Rubbie Mzumara Mtike,

ADRA Mali,

P.O. Box 1638,

Bamako,

Mali.

Email: rubbiebeth@gmail.com

Dear Mrs Mtike,

RESEARCH ETHICS AND REGULATORY APPROVAL AND PERMIT FOR PROTOCOL NO. P.09/22/669: THE PERSISTENCE OF GENDER INEQUALITY AND DISPARITY IN ENTERPRISES AND ITS EFFECT ON WORK PERFORMANCE IN MALAWI: AN ANALYSIS OF CULTURE, AGE, GENDER

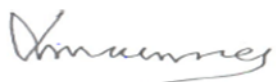
Having satisfied all the relevant ethical and regulatory requirements, I am pleased to inform you that the above referred research protocol has officially been approved. You are now permitted to proceed with its implementation. Should there be any amendments to the approved protocol in the course of implementing it, you shall be required to seek approval of such amendments before implementation of the same.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of issuance of this approval. If the study goes beyond one year, an annual approval for continuation shall be required to be sought from the National

Committee on Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NCRSH) in a format that is available at the Secretariat. Once the study is finalised, you are required to furnish the Committee and the Commission with a final report of the study. The committee reserves the right to carry out compliance inspection of this approved protocol at any time as may be deemed by it. As such, you are expected to properly maintain all study documents including consent forms.

Wishing you a successful implementation of your study.

Yours Sincerely,



Yalonda .I. Mwanza
NCRSH ADMINISTRATOR
HEALTH, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES DIVISION

For: CHAIRPERSON OF NCRSH

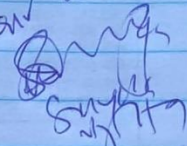
Committee Address:

Secretariat, National Committee on Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities, National Commission for Science and Technology, Lingadzi House, City Centre, P/Bag B303, Capital City, Lilongwe3, Malawi. Telephone Nos: +265 771 550/774 869; E-mail address: ncrsh@ncst.mw

ADRA Mali
P.O. Box 1638
Bamako, Mali.

The Director
Mzuzu Central Hospital
Mzuzu, Malawi

Chairperson - Research
for your assistance

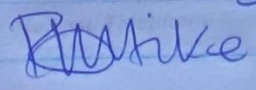

10/10/22

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request to Carry out a Quantitative Research
on Gender Equality.

My name is Rubbie Mzumara Mike, a
student at Adventist University of Africa in
Nairobi, Kenya.

I would like to request if I can be
allowed to administer a questionnaire on a
quantitative study on gender inequality in
Mzuzu. This is in pursuance of a thesis
defense for my Study entitled "The perception
of Gender Inequality and Disparity in Enterprises
and its effect on Work Performance in Malawi
an Analysis of culture, Age and Gender.
Your favourable response will be highly
appreciated."

Yours Sincerely


Rubbie M. Mike

Telephone: 01320916/878
Fax: 320223/320973/878
Email:
mzuzucentraldirector@gmail.com



In reply please quote No.
The Hospital Director
Mzuzu Central Hospital
P/Bag 209
Luwinga
Mzuzu 2

07th September, 2022

Rubbie Mtike, Registered PhD
ADRA Mali,
P.O 1638.
Bamako,
Mali
Cell: +265881925959
Email: rubbiebeth@gmail.com

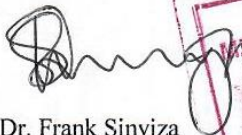
Dear Rubbie Mtike,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT MZUZU CENTRAL HOSPITAL

Reference is made to your email received on Thursday 09 October, 2022 in which you are seeking permission to conduct a research study titled *"The Persistence of Gender Inequality and Disparity in Enterprise on Work Performance in Malawi: An Analysis of Culture, Age, Gender."* The MCH Research Committee has now reviewed your study protocol and I am pleased to inform you that permission has been granted. You can use this letter as evidence of support from an institution (MCH) when seeking ethical clearance from COMREC/NHSRC/NCST or any other recognized Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Note: Please take note that MCH policy requires that you pay a financial contribution to the institution which is 5% of your study budget before you can start implementing your study at the facility as per NHSRC requirements. If the study will be implemented in multiple sites an appropriate amount shall be determined taking into account the number of sites in which the study is to be implemented. Payment is strictly through National Bank of Malawi, Mzuzu Central Hospital Research and Partnership Account, Current account number **1004797902**.

When you are ready for data collection at MCH you will be required to present this letter, ethical approval letter from a recognized ethical review body and evidence of payment of the stipulated fees to the Chairperson of MCH Research Committee before you can begin data collection. We trust that you shall strictly adhere to study procedures as outlined in your study protocol.


Dr. Frank Sinyiza
The Hospital Director



ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA
P/B Mbagathi,
Nairobi, Kenya

10 October 2022.

THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH
Mzuzu University
Mzuzu
Malawi

Dear Sir,

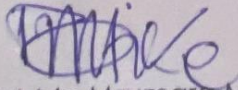
PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR RESEARCH

My name is Rubbie Mzumara Mtike, a student at Adventist University of Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. I am currently collecting data for the defense of my thesis titled ". The persistence of Gender Inequality and disparity in enterprises and its effect on work performance in Malawi: An analysis of culture, Age and Gender".

I therefore would like to seek permission to conduct part of the research by collecting data from the Mzuzu University campus to enable me finalize my thesis for defense. Kindly find attached ethical clearance from the institution in Kenya and the Ethical clearance body of Malawi, the National Committee on Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NCST).

Your favorable response will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,


Rubbie Mzumara Mtike



MZUZU UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR

Private Bag 201
Luwingu
Mzuzu 2
MALAWI
Tel.: (265) 01 320 722/575
Fax: (265) 01 320 505
Email: unr@mzuni.ac.mw

Ref: MU/1/P1.04

13th October 2022

Ms Rubbie Mzumara Mtike
Adventist University of Africa
P/B Bagathi
Nairobi
Kenya

Dear Ms. Mtike,

RE: PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR RESEARCH

Reference is made to your letter dated 10th October, 2022 in which you were seeking permission to collect data from Mzuzu University Campus to enable you finalize your Thesis for defense under the topic of the persistence of Gender inequality and disparity in enterprises and its effect on work performance in Malawi: An analysis of culture, Age and Gender.

I am pleased to convey **approval** of your request and urge you to strictly follow research ethics and regulations.

Let me take this opportunity to wish you the best in your data collection exercise.

Yours sincerely,

GEOFFREY MKANDAWIRE
FOR: UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR



cc: Vice-Chancellor
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Director of Research

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRES

a. Human Resources Questionnaire

	<i>Total Number</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Board of Directors			
Executives or Executive Board			
Senior Management or Managers			
No. of Workforce/Employees			

Definitions of Terms

Board of Directors: - refers to the group of people who jointly govern the company, establish broad policies, set out strategic objectives, and appoint the CEO. Where the company has a Supervisory Board and a Management Board, this refers to the Supervisory Board.

Executives: - refers to the highest level and most influential group of people that oversees the business operations of the company and form the C-Suite, company executive committee, or equivalent.

Senior Management: - are the group of individuals at the highest level of day-to-day management of the company as defined and reported within the company. This is the group of senior managers that report to the Executive C-Suite or Executive Committee/Board.

Workforce: - All the employees in the organization.

b. Employees' Questionnaire

My name is Rubbie *Mzumara Mtike*, a student at Adventist University of Africa (AUA) in Kenya. I am carrying out a study on the perceptions of gender inequality at the work place. This study will interview samples representing the perceptions of working Malawians in Mzuzu on gender equality. You have been randomly selected as part of a representative sample of working Malawians in Mzuzu. I'd like to ask your views on the following questions below. Your input will be treated with strict confidentiality. Your input will contribute to a better understanding to what Malawians in Mzuzu are experiencing and their perspectives on gender inequality and disparity at the work place. If you have any questions or if you encounter any technical difficulties, please email at mtiker@aua.ac.ke. Thank you for your collaboration.

Date:

Please don't write your name on any part of the papers.

DEMOGRAPHICS

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE PLACE THAT WHICH DESCRIBES YOUR GENDER, AGE RANGE, LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND JOB TITLE RANGE.

Sex (gender)	Male	Female			
Age (Years)	18 – 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51 - 60	61 and above
Level of Education	Primary	JC/MSCE	Degree	Masters	PhD/Doctorate
Job Title	Executive or Senior Management level	Middle Management level	Senior staff	Support staff level	

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ON EACH QUESTION THAT REFLECTS YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. Whether you strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree or strongly agree represented by 1,2,3,4,5.

1 Strongly disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 Agree, strongly agree

	Perspectives towards Gender Inequality					
1	I think a university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.	1	2	3	4	5
2	It is my opinion that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I believe that if a woman earns more money than her husband, it's almost certain to cause problems.	1	2	3	4	5
4	It is my perspective that women's priority should be bearing and taking care of children at home.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel it is unfair that Female employees are given priority in promotion opportunities in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I think it is okay for the company to offer flexible working hours for working mothers with children.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I think it is okay for the company to offer flexible working hours for working fathers with children.	1	2	3	4	5
8	In my current work I feel that men and women are treated equally	1	2	3	4	5

9	I feel that female workers (women) should take up male designated jobs to promote gender equality	1	2	3	4	5
10	Women are perceived as good leaders for this organization	1	2	3	4	5
	Gender Disparity					
11	There is really too little chance for my promotion in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive in my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5
14	The company has a fair benefits and remuneration (pay) policy.	1	2	3	4	5
15	A male and female employee should be entitled to same maternity or paternity leave -days with full pay	1	2	3	4	5
16	This company has a strategy, or is acting to close any identified gender pay gap.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I don't feel my efforts at work are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5
18	There are benefits I do not have which I should have.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I feel that workplace benefits should be the same for both male and female employees	1	2	3	4	5
	Culture					
20	I believe Men make better political leaders than women do.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I am sure support staff should be able to question their boss's decisions or students their teachers'.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Do you think your organization should have a male employee as the CEO or manager?	1	2	3	4	5
23	Can a female employee make a good CEO or manager for your organization?	1	2	3	4	5
24	Are female employees willing to take up jobs believed to be for men despite the low salary pay?	1	2	3	4	5
25	I feel both a man or woman can be good boss or leader for this organization so long they have the same education.	1	2	3	4	5
26	A woman and a man on the same position should receive the same salary or pay.	1	2	3	4	5
27	When jobs are scarce, men should be given priority to a job than women.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I think that gender equality is very important in our organization	1	2	3	4	5
29	Is raising female gendered job's salary better than promoting women to male gendered jobs?	1	2	3	4	5
30	Men make better business executives than women do.	1	2	3	4	5
	Work performance					
31	I have complete independence in performing my tasks at workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
32	As a parent I am willing to work hard for the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
33	I am satisfied with the opportunities for promotion in my job	1	2	3	4	5
34	I have job satisfaction and feel that work should always come first for my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
35	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless and wish to resign.	1	2	3	4	5
36	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5
37	I like doing the things I do at work at the moment and it is fulfilling.	1	2	3	4	5
38	I feel a sense of pride and enjoyment in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
39	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion and is willing to work hard for it.	1	2	3	4	5
40	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition I deserve makes me willing to do more.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Appendix V (a) Standard Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.825	.292		6.242	.000		
Gender	.078	.067	.053	1.166	.244	.896	1.116
Age	.021	.030	.031	.716	.474	.981	1.019
Level of Education	-.003	.053	-.003	-.065	.948	.954	1.048
Work Performance	.348	.035	.450	10.077	.000	.923	1.083
Culture	-.119	.041	-.137	-2.874	.004	.807	1.239
Gender Disparity	.190	.036	.232	5.215	.000	.926	1.080
Gender Inequality	.189	.041	.216	4.652	.000	.849	1.178

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Appendix V (b) Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.75	5.25	4.11	.415	380
Residual	-2.354	1.338	.000	.610	380
Std. Predicted Value	-3.282	2.763	.000	1.000	380
Std. Residual	-3.824	2.174	.000	.991	380

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Appendix V (c) Stepwise regression analysis Model Summary

Model	R		Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
	R	Square			R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.446 ^a	.199	.197	.661	.199	93.899	1	378	.000
2	.474 ^b	.225	.221	.651	.026	12.583	1	377	.000
3	.518 ^c	.269	.263	.633	.044	22.617	1	376	.000
4	.559 ^d	.313	.306	.615	.044	24.056	1	375	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture

c. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity

d. Predictors: (Constant), Work Performance, Culture, Gender Disparity, Gender Inequality

Appendix V (d) Stepwise regression analysis Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.909	.128		22.685	.000		
	Work Performance	.345	.036	.446	9.690	.000	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)	3.207	.152		21.132	.000		
	Work Performance	.361	.035	.466	10.200	.000	.985	1.015
	Culture	-.141	.040	-.162	-3.547	.000	.985	1.015
3	(Constant)	2.724	.179		15.207	.000		
	Work Performance	.373	.034	.482	10.818	.000	.979	1.021
	Culture	-.188	.040	-.217	-4.722	.000	.923	1.083
	Gender Disparity	.177	.037	.217	4.756	.000	.936	1.069
4	(Constant)	1.987	.230		8.640	.000		
	Work Performance	.345	.034	.446	10.169	.000	.952	1.051
	Culture	-.128	.040	-.148	-3.173	.002	.840	1.190
	Gender Disparity	.190	.036	.233	5.250	.000	.930	1.075
	Gender Inequality	.195	.040	.224	4.905	.000	.876	1.141

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Appendix V (e) Interaction Gender Inequality Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	4.333	.117		36.888	.000	
	Culture	-.092	.044	-.106	-2.073	.039	1.000
2	(Constant)	4.352	.116		37.601	.000	
	Culture	-.114	.044	-.131	-2.588	.010	1.019
	InteractionGI	-.123	.034	-.185	-3.646	.000	1.019

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

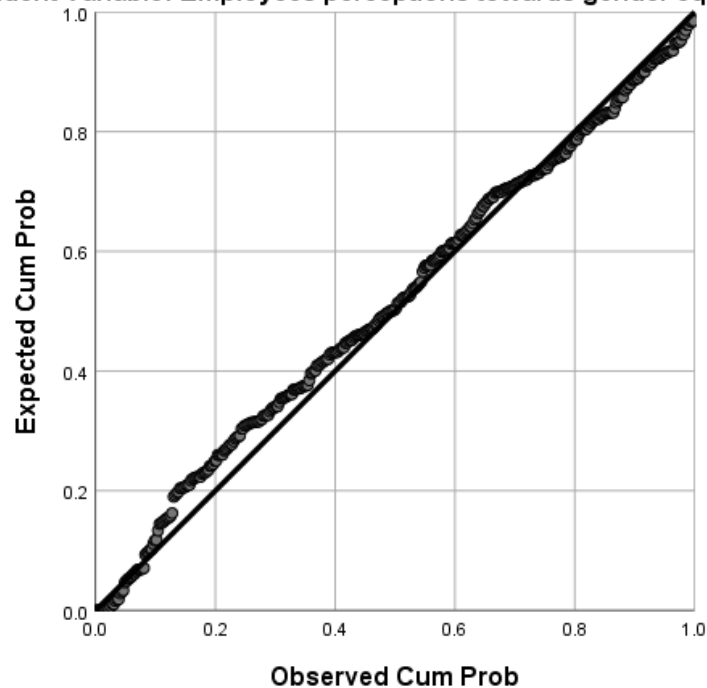
Appendix V (f) Interaction Education Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	4.332	.117		36.948	.000	
	Culture	-.090	.044	-.104	-2.036	.042	1.000
2	(Constant)	4.345	.119		36.614	.000	
	Culture	-.097	.045	-.112	-2.145	.033	1.043
	InteractionEducation	.029	.038	.039	.751	.453	1.043

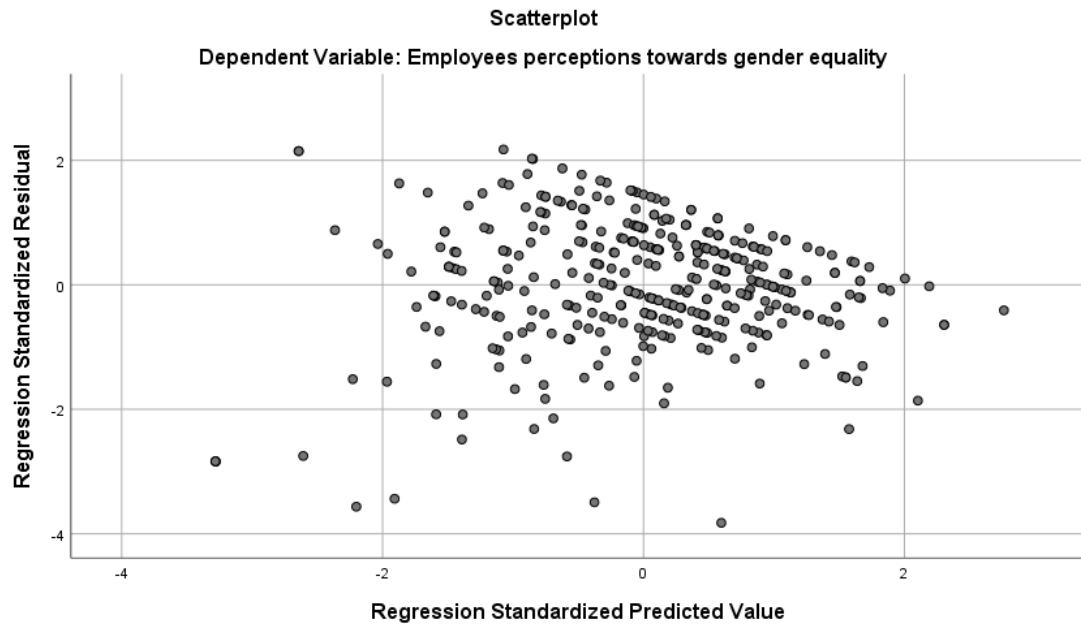
a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Appendix V (g) Test of Linearity

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual
Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality



Appendix V (h) Test of Homoscedasticity



Appendix V (i) Durbin-Watson Test of Independence of errors

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.562 ^a	.316	.303	.616	1.892

a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of Education, Gender Disparity, Age, Gender, Work Performance, Gender Inequality, Culture

b. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

APPENDIX F

ANY OTHER SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Annex F (I) – Mediating Work performance Coefficients^a

Table 1 (c) Modeling Work Performance Outcomes									
Model	Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	Coefficients		Coefficients						
	Std.					Lower	Upper		
	B	Error	Beta	t		Bound	Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	3,195	,151		21,102	,000	2,898	3,493		
Culture	-,142	,040	-,163	-3,587	,000	-,220	-,064	,986	1,015
Work Performance	,365	,035	,471	10,362	,000	,295	,434	,986	1,015

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

Annexe F (II) Mediating Gender Disparity Coefficients^a

Table 2. (continued) Descriptive Statistics, Correlation Coefficients, and Regression Statistics									
Model	Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	Coefficients		Coefficients						
	Std.					Lower	Upper		
	B	Error	Beta	t		Bound	Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	3,969	,157		25,205	,000	3,659	4,278		
Culture	-,129	,045	-,148	-2,865	,004	-,218	-,041	,942	1,062
Gender Disparity	,145	,042	,177	3,423	,001	,062	,229	,942	1,062

a. Dependent Variable: Employees perceptions towards gender equality

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Rubbie B. Mzumara Mtike

ADDRESS: ADRA Mali, P.O. Box 1638, Bamako, MALI

Telephone: +223 70 78 08 21

Email: mtiker@aua.ac.ke; rubbiebeth@gmail.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE

Committed to work with organizations where effectiveness, efficiency and ability to learn and grow are valued characteristics.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

a) **Scholar: Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership, Strategic Business Strand (in progress)**

Adventist University of Africa, Private Bag Mbagathi 00503, Nairobi, KENYA

Strand: **Business Strategic planning**

Research Thesis Topic: *Leadership in Development: Gender and Development*

Research Thesis Title: *Gender Inequality among Employees of Medium Enterprises and its Impact on Gender disparity at the work place*

b) **MASTERS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (MIDA):**

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103, USA.

Major: International Development.

Concentration Area – *Non-Profit Organizations Policies and Operations*

Research Project Topic: *Working Policy and Women Empowering in UNICEF and ADRA in Lubumbashi*

Date of graduation: December 2014.

GPA 3.78

c) **LEGAL EDUCATION:**

Completed Malawi Bar Exams

Pupilage - Six Months - Pupilage with Waruhiu K'owade & Ng'ang'a

Advocates, TAJ Towers, 4th Floor, Wing B, P.O. Box 47122-00100, Nairobi, KENYA – Tel: +254722-200663/+254734-416332.

d) **BACHELOR OF LAWS (LLB) HONS SECOND UPPER:**

University of Nairobi, P.O. 30197, Nairobi, KENYA. I graduated on December 07, 2007.

Research Title for LLB Dissertation: *The Efficacy of the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Africa, unpublished.*

Additional class not on transcript - Consumer Protection

- e) **BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE:** Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103, USA (Solusi Campus), major in Home Economics (nutrition), Minor-English and Religion, graduated on June 6, 1991. GPA 3.58
- f) **MALAWI SCHOOL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION:** Marymount Secondary School, P.O. Box 135, Mzuzu, Malawi, completed in June 1987 with 8 ‘O’ level credits.
- g) **Refresher Courses**
 - SPSS training - Mali 2022
 - Emergency Response Team Training and Simulation (ERT) (Madagascar – 2019)
 - Theory of Change and knowledge Management Training Course –2019 (Thailand)
 - ADRA’s Annual Council Trainings –2014 (Thailand)
 - Africa Emergency Safety and Security Workshop –2012 (South Africa)
 - Management Orientation Workshop –2012 (USA)
 - Inter Action Enhanced Facilitators Training Workshop on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Strengthening Facilitators to Train on SEA Modules – 2012 (Nairobi)
 - Investigations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – 2012 (Nairobi)
 - Community-based Complaints Mechanisms for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse – 2012 (Nairobi)
 - Emergency Management Workshop – 2011 (Rwanda)
 - Emergency Management (APLI) – 2009 (Nairobi)
 - Planning (APLI) – 2009 (Nairobi)
 - Human Resource Management (APLI) – 2008 (Nairobi)

WORK EXPERIENCE

- A) **January 1 to present**
 - Assistant Director, Hope channel
 - Consultant, ADRA Norway
- B) **October 1, 2018 to present**
 - Education Coordinator, SEAQE Project
 - Monitoring, Evaluation Accountability and Learning Coordinator
 - ADRA in Mali (West Africa)
- C) **January 1, 2016 to 30 September, 2018**
 - Associate Country Director**
 - ADRA DRC South Zone (ECUM) (East Central Africa)
- D) **October 2013 to December 2015:**
 - i) Associate Director: Communication and Youth (East Congo Union Mission) Department
 - ii) ADRA Liaison (ADRA South East Congo)

- E) **May 2013 to October 2013:**
Acting Country Director, ADRA
- F) **September 2011 to April 2013:**
Programs Director, ADRA
- G) **September 20, 2007 to August 2011:**
Administrative Assistant
ADRA Africa Regional Office,
P/ Bag Mbagathi 00503, Nairobi, Kenya.
- H) **July 25, 2000 to September 20, 2007:**
Break for LLB studies at University of Malawi and transferred to University of Nairobi.
- I) **May 1, 1998 to July 24, 2000:**
School Registrar
Malamulo Secondary School, Private Bag 3, Makwasa, Malawi.
- J) **January 1, 1998 to April 30, 1998:**
Associate Catering Director and Dietician
Blantyre Adventist Hospital, P.O. Box 51, Blantyre, MALAWI.
- K) **June 1, 1996 to December 31, 1997:**
Head of English Department
Malamulo Secondary School, Private Bag 3, Makwasa, Malawi.
- L) **November 1, 1991 to May 30, 1996:**
Teacher:
Malamulo Secondary School, Private Bag 3, Makwasa, Malawi.
- M) **July 1, 1991 to October 31, 1991:**
Accounts Clerk:
Adventist Book Centre, P.O. Box 11, Makwasa, Malawi.
- N) **May 1988 to June 6, 1991:**
Student Registrar Assistant:
Andrews University,
Solusi Campus, P.O. Solusi, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Computer Proficiency

I have acquired a working knowledge of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Publisher and Microsoft PowerPoint. I have also been able to work with database programs for compiling student enrolment records during my work as Registrar.

Extra Curricula Activities

May 2010 to September 2011: Vice Chairperson Advent Hill Primary School Board.

August 2007 to May 2011:

Advent Hill Primary School Board Member.

Acted as the secretary of the planning committee during the time when the Division was establishing the school which became the Board after a year, in 2008.

Girl's Head Prefect (1990 -1991): Andrews University, Solusi Campus, P.O. Solusi, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Marital Status: Married

Languages Proficiency:

- Fluent in English, Chichewa, Tumbuka and average French and Swahili.

Hobbies: Reading, Singing, Travelling and Sewing.